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Christmas  
Issue 2001

**STEPHEN BAYLEY  
INTRODUCES DESIGN  
CLASSICS**

**NICHOLAS FOULKES  
MEETS THE ANGRY  
YOUNG MEN**

**MICHAEL BROADBENT  
SAMPLES 50s WINES**

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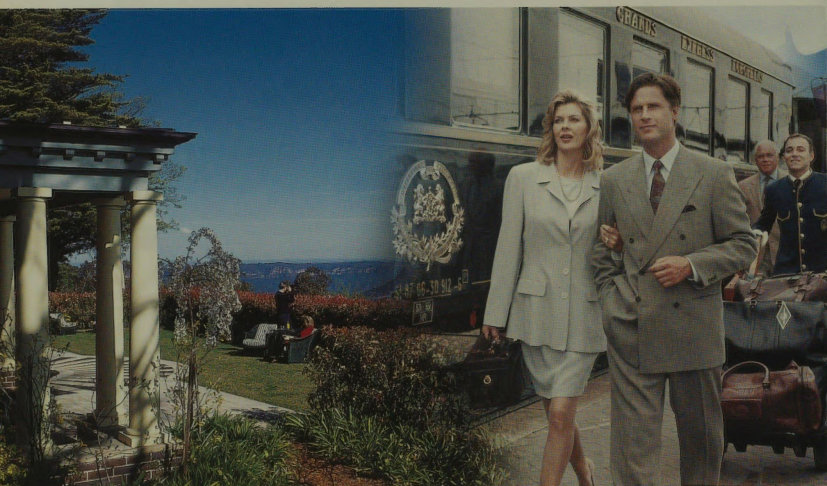
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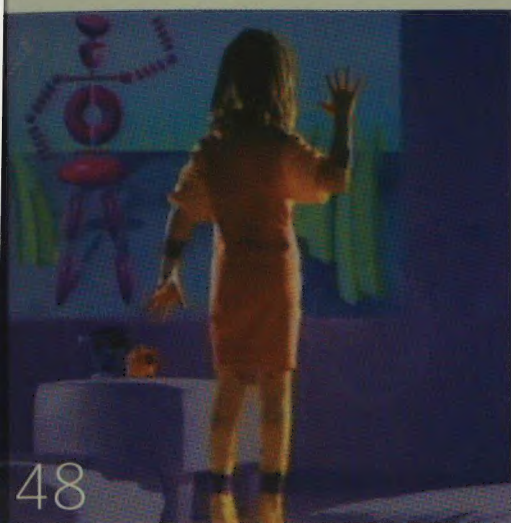
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## The 50s and the future

World War II sliced the 20th century in half; as Queen Elizabeth II acceded to the throne in February 1952, the world was changing at an ever-accelerating pace. Following hardship years of depression and conflict, the half-century that the Queen's golden jubilee is poised to celebrate has been one of unprecedented growth and rapid development.

In anticipation of next year's jubilee festivities, the 2001 Christmas issue of *The Illustrated London News* is raising a toast to the 1950s. While exploring post-war trends and innovations that continue to affect our lives, we're also casting our eyes to the future. What do the coming years hold for technology, design and social mores that first kicked off in the new Elizabethan era?

Join style guru Stephen Bayley as he introduces cult classics from the 50s that are still hot property today. Whether cars, furniture or credit cards, he traces the trajectory from *dernier cri* in modernity to tongue-in-chic period piece. Or consider the Angry Young Man in the company of social commentator Nicholas Foulkes. Who are the Jimmy Porters of the 2000s—if they exist at all?

We all assume that London is getting filthier and more polluted—or is it? Look back at the 50s and you'll encounter pea-souper smog, steam trains trailing smutty smoke and a total absence of fish in the Thames between Richmond and Tilbury. Leading environmental pundit Fred Pearce looks back at London in the 1950s and evaluates what's grown worse in 2001 and—amazingly—what's a whole lot better.

Settle down with a Starbucks (*not* a cup of Camp) and keep turning the pages as Nicholas Faith investigates the death of deference, Michael Broadbent introduces wines from the 1950s and Avril Groom goes boutique-hopping. So you thought life as we know it started in the 60s? It's time to take another look and discover how it was a decade earlier when things really started to swing.

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Endearing images of the 50s mark half a century of the Queen's succession.

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Avril Groom explores the rebirth of the boutique and lists the capital's best.

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*The Illustrated London News* mingled with the literati at the annual PEN dinner.

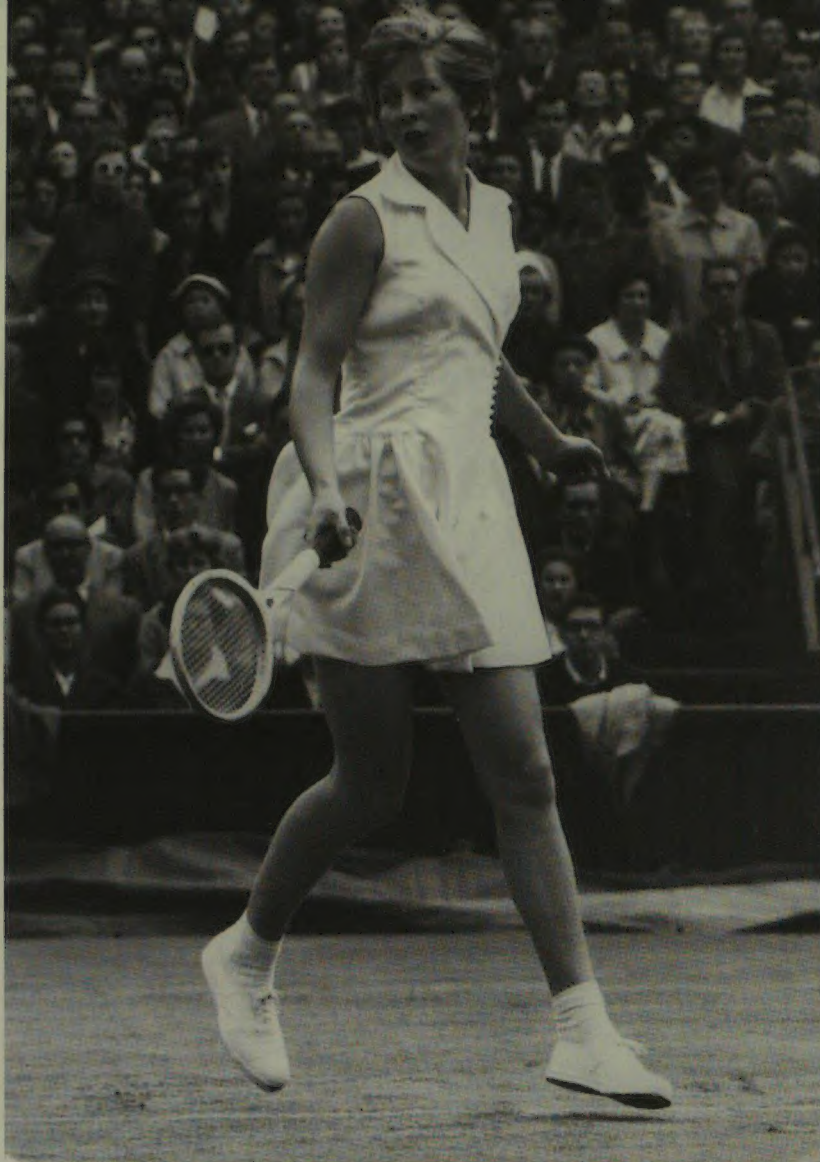
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HULTON ARCHIVE

# Faces of the 50s

Five personalities with fond memories of the 50s describe their experiences as they made their way into the spotlight.

## The tennis star

**Christine Janes (née Truman) reached the semi-finals of Wimbledon in 1957 when she was just 16. Two years later, in 1959, she won the French Singles (now the French Open). She was made an MBE this year.**

### What were you doing during the 1950s?

I ate, slept and dreamt tennis. I started playing at the start of the decade when I was nine or 10. I always wanted to play Wimbledon and in 1957 I reached the semi-finals. After that, life changed and I spent increasing amounts of time practising.

### What was it like to be successful so young?

I had no expectations at the time, but youth has a confidence and I always felt I could get to the top. It (1957) was the first time I had entered Wimbledon, 16 was the earliest you could enter, and I wasn't seeded. To get to the semi-finals was amazing and there was huge media coverage. After Wimbledon I was recognised everywhere I went and I travelled the world, living a global lifestyle following the sun to play in tournaments. I was never lonely though. My parents were very supportive and my mother came with me to everything or else I was chaperoned. There was nobody else of my age around but I never had time to think



GLEN EDWARDS/REDFERNS, FAR RIGHT: MICHAEL LOOKS ARCHIVES/REDFERNS

about what was going on back home and what I might be missing. Life was too exciting.

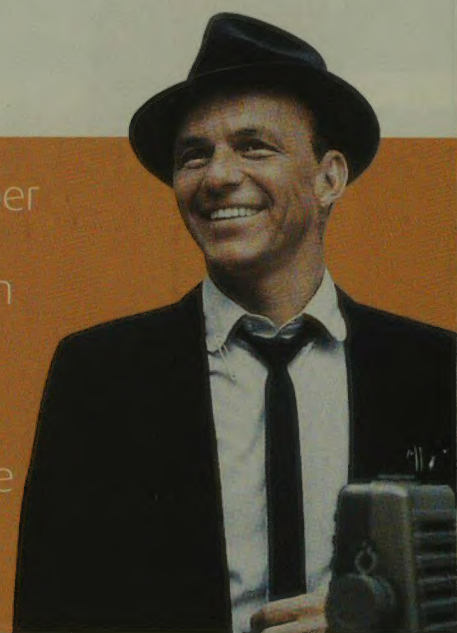
### Who influenced you during that decade?

My mother was a tremendous force at that time—she saw the opportunity and gave me the chance to go for it. My second coach, the television commentator Dan Maskell, was also a great influence.

### Where did you live?

In Woodford Green in an old-fashioned, Edwardian family house. My father was an accountant but, as I was one of six children, we didn't have money to spare.

"I remember watching *Liberace* on Sunday... Frank Sinatra defined the decade."



### Did you have holidays?

Every year we would rent a cottage in Suffolk. My husband and I now live there.

### What music defined the decade?

Frank Sinatra. I loved the song "Chicago" and I also loved the American singer Lester Lannin and Glen Miller.

### What technology did you own?

We got our first television when I was 12 and I remember watching *Treasure Island* and *Liberace* on Sunday afternoons. We had an old wind-up record player, too, and but I later bought my own electric one.



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## The comedian

**Actor, comedian and compère Nicholas Parsons worked in the heart of London's thriving entertainment scene during the 1950s. He has hosted Radio 4's *Just a Minute* for 35 years.**

### What were you doing during the 1950s?

Struggling for recognition. In the early 1950s I worked at Bromley rep but I spent most of the decade trying to get to the West End. There was a big cabaret scene in the 1950s that attracted the trendy crowd and I moved on to that. Most smart restaurants had a cabaret artist or floor show and I was taken on by Quaglino's where I did a 40-minute show.

In 1952 I became resident comedian at the famous Windmill Theatre, which was considered very raunchy at the time. It was run like a cinema with six shows a day on continuous rotation. The Windmill's slogan was "We never close" and it never did, even during the war. I also did a lot of work as a variety artist during the 1950s in what was called "intimate review", playing in small theatres, such as the Watergate near Charing Cross, that put on smart, clever songs and sketches.

### When was your big break?

When independent television started in 1956 I teamed up with a comedian called Arthur Haynes for a show called *Strike a New Note*. It was a flop but was repackaged into a show of sketches called *Get Happy* which turned out to be a huge success. By the 1960s it was the top comedy show on independent television and I became a household name.

### What was special about the 1950s?

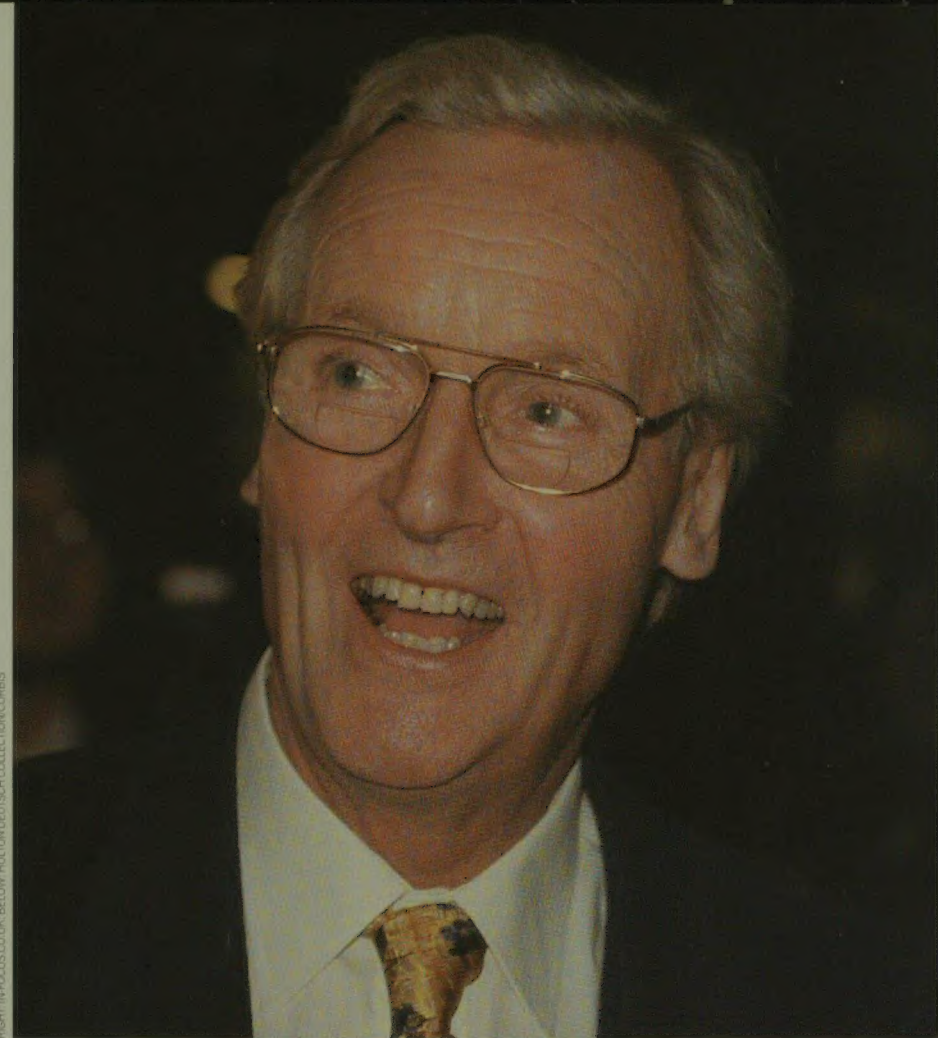
It was a different era of entertainment. All the forms of entertainment that existed then have completely disappeared—cabaret, variety, intimate cabaret.

### What was the mood of the decade?

The seeds of change that exploded in the 1960s were sown in the 1950s. It was a decade of intense change but also a period of austerity. There was still rationing and people were adjusting after the trauma of the war.

### Where did you live?

I lived at home with my parents in London (my father was a doctor) until 1950 when I got my first flat in Judd Street near King's Cross. At



RIGHT: IN FOCUS.CO.UK; BELOW: HALTON/GETTY COLLECTION/CORBIS



"In 1952 I became resident comedian at the Windmill Theatre, which was considered very raunchy at the time."

that time accommodation was hard to find and I had to pay something called key money to secure the flat. When I married, in 1954, I moved into my wife's flat in Park Crescent which was a much more salubrious area.

### What technology do you remember?

I didn't drink or smoke but I always wanted a car. My first one was a second-hand, black Hillman Minx and later, in the mid-1950s, when I had made some money, I bought a brand-new Ford Popular. I would drive it around London—there was barely any traffic on the roads and you could park anywhere. I got a television early on, in 1952. I remember friends ringing up and asking if they could come round to look at it. A lot of it was terribly boring though, and it broke down all the time.

I remember when independent television started there was a huge uproar in the House

of Commons—it was said it would be the death of our society.

### What music did you listen to?

I preferred the great performers of the past such as Tommy Trinder. I also liked Sarah Vaughan and Ella Fitzgerald. The big musical of the time was *Oklahoma*. When it came to the Drury Lane Theatre in 1953, it had a huge impact. The songs I remember came from *Annie Get Your Gun* and I've always loved the song "There's No Business Like Show Business".

### Did you have holidays?

I spent much of the 1950s struggling and couldn't afford holidays. The first time I went abroad was in the 1950s when my parents took me to Switzerland. When I married, in 1954, we spent our honeymoon in Majorca.



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"Some friends and I staked out our place on the Coronation route the evening before and slept out all night."



## The presenter

**Valerie Singleton, 64, is a journalist and television presenter. During the 1950s she was struggling to establish herself and later went on to present *Blue Peter* and *Nationwide*.**

### What were you doing during the 1950s?

I was 13 when the decade began and 23 when it ended. I lived in a mews cottage off Fulham Road with my parents and, between the ages of 16 and 18, I went to the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts. I then became assistant stage manager at the Bromley Rep, which was a very good job for someone who was just out of drama school.

In the late 1950s I was starting to establish myself. I never really intended to become a television presenter, it just happened.

### Describe your home life.

I lived at home until I was 25: because my parents lived in London there was never any need to move out. My father had his own photographic business and things were quite hard for us until he joined the advertising agency J Walter Thompson when I was 16. My mother helped out with the business and

later worked as a Montessori teacher. The 1950s were quite a struggle for my parents. The food we ate then was very plain—lots of roasts and vegetables in season.

I remember there was a little shop on Fulham Road where a lady sat darning. If you laddered your stockings, you took them in and she mended them.

### What did you do socially?

I had three very good friends who all lived around the King's Road and spent weekends with them. We would go swimming at the baths in King's Road and to Saturday morning cinema on Fulham Road. That gave me my love of the cinema—that and two films my parents took me to see—*The Way To the Stars* and *Beau Geste*.

During my drama-school days I worked at a little café called The Bamboo on the corner of Drayton Gardens. It was run by two white Russians who always played Edith Piaf and I was paid 10 shillings (about 50 pence) a night.

### What technology did you have?

We didn't have a television until I was 16. I used to love the children's programmes on the radio such as *Henry Bones* and *Wurzel Gummidge*. We also had a huge, old

radiogram in the centre of our living room on which we used to play records.

### Who influenced you during the 1950s?

Nobody. There weren't the sort of figureheads around that there are now. Children were just clones of their parents at that time.

### What music did you listen to?

Music wasn't particularly important to me but I loved Guy Mitchell and Dennis Lotis. Years later when I went out with Pete Murray I actually danced with Dennis Lotis.

### What was the defining moment of the decade?

Going to see the Coronation. Some friends and I staked out our place on the route the evening before and slept out all night. The other thing I remember is getting in the car and going on picnics to Richmond Park.

### Did you go on holiday?

We went to a caravan in Devon. Those were the days when fishermen came to lay out their nets early in the morning and I remember going down to the beach with them. We also used to go on holiday to North Wales where we would stay in cottages or farmhouses.





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## The actor

**Actor Tom Conti, 59, was a teenager in Scotland during the 1950s. He trained to be a classical pianist at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music during the 1950s before changing course to become an actor.**

### What were you doing during the 1950s?

School, then drama college in Glasgow. Mostly trying to get girls to talk to me.

### Was there one event that defined the decade for you?

I fell in love for the first time. Despite it being unrequited, it lasted about five years.

### What was the mood of the 1950s?

I remember quite a lot of scientific excitement, heralded for me by The Dome of Discovery at the Festival of Britain. The tape recorder, of course, the turbine engine; the breaching of the sound barrier; the deaths of the speed kings Donald Campbell and John Cobb. I don't remember such an exciting time, but then excitement is easy to induce in one's second decade.

### Who influenced you during that decade and why?

Authors such as Salinger, Sagan and Turgenev. In relation to work, a tutor called

John Groves, who impressed upon me the importance of "craft".

### Where did you live in the 1950s?

In Scotland, in a four bedroom house with a reasonable-sized garden in which my father grew, under glass—this being Scotland—grapes, peaches and figs.

### What music do you associate with the 1950s?

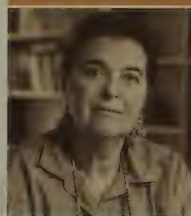
Though my interest was principally classical, "Rock around the Clock" figured somewhere. The "Ingenisco" from Verdi's *Requiem* also hit my consciousness.

### What sort of technology did you own?

TV, fridge, and gramophone, of course. This was the decade that brought the LP—very exciting. The Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto on one disc instead of six. The most hi-tech piece of equipment we had was a reel-to-reel tape recorder.

### Did you have holidays?

Yes—to Italy. Usually Venice and Rome, then down to somewhere like Positano. I also loved trips to London, which I found hugely exciting. It was, as far as many of us were concerned, still the centre of an, albeit crumbling, great empire.



## The Author

**Lynne Reid Banks was born in 1929. In the 1950s she became the first female television presenter in the UK and also wrote her best selling novel, *The L-Shaped Room*. Reid Banks is author of 25 books, including the children's *The Indian in the Cupboard* series.**

### What were you doing during the 1950s?

In the early 1950s I was acting in repertory theatre and also worked as a freelance journalist. But when I was 25 my father died and my mother was left alone, so I needed to get a proper income.

In 1951 I got a job as a news reporter for the new commercial television channel—an event that changed my life. The new channel wanted to make news very differently from the stuffy BBC. It wanted it to be more populist, to send people out on interviews and have women in front of the cameras.

Despite the boldness of recruiting women, we still got the soft stories, but I was so thrilled to work in TV that it didn't bother me. At that time we didn't expect equality. After three or four years they wanted a new face in front of the camera and I became a scriptwriter. There were long periods of inactivity, and as an escape I started to write a book. That turned out to be *The L-Shaped Room*, which was published in 1960 but written during the 1950s.

### What was the most important event of the decade?

Suez. I was shocked by the implication that Israel, France and Britain had colluded in this attack by Israel on Egypt and thought maybe this nation wasn't perfect after all. Even so, in 1959, when *The L-Shaped Room* was sold, I got the £100 advance and took myself to Israel on holiday. It was heaven for me. I just felt everybody was living their dream.

Despite all this, it was still very important to find a husband. I remember reaching 26 and not being married when everyone else was. I didn't meet my husband until I was 31.



### Where did you live during the 1950s?

At the beginning of the decade, when I was in rep, I lived in humble digs in Yorkshire. Later, I rented a series of flats, but the one I really loved was in Kensington. I mostly wrote *The L-Shaped Room* there. It was very comfortable but cost £5 a week, which was expensive.

### What technology did you have?

The most important thing was my record player, which could play a whole symphony by dropping one record down on top of another. My flat had a fridge and I had a Morris Minor. Mum got a TV for the Queen's Coronation and of course we all listened to the radio.

### What music defined the decade for you?

I mainly listened to classical but I also liked show music. I loved Frank Sinatra's *Songs for Swingin' Lovers*, especially "You Make Me Feel So Young" and "Baby It's Cold Outside".

### Were you interested in fashion?

I had to dress well for the television. I loved wearing my Horrocks cotton dresses—bright with bold patterns, drawstring neck and a full skirt with stiff petticoat underneath.

### Who influenced you during the 1950s?

My mother was my main influence. I always wanted to please her. My agent was also a big influence. She encouraged me to write *The L-Shaped Room* and would ring me every week to ask how many pages I'd written.

### Did you have holidays?

In 1958, I answered an advertisement for a "gay young house party" in Positano. I drove all the way there with a friend and, although the villa was beautiful, the men did indeed turn out to be gay so I spent all my time with the locals. I also remember going to Paris, where I had a friend who was an opera singer.

Lynne Reid Banks' latest novel, *Fair Exchange*, is published by Watson, Little. Her new novel, *The Dungeon*, will be published next year.



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EVERYONE KNOWS about the 1960s. They were (hey, conform!) youth, the 1960s, the decade that preceded the glorious 1970s. Theirs was a time of new ideas, new attitudes and policies, which would have seemed to the followers of the old to be almost impossible, indeed fashionable, to challenge the existing system. Well, think again. All the iconoclasm that we now look back on as pure 1960s did not suddenly start as the decade dawned and we were allowed to read *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Nor did it happen three years later when the Beatles released their first LP. No, it all began fermenting several years earlier, and was well underway as the 60s began.

Nor that the 60s started out anything other than dingy and restrictive. It is virtually impossible to convey to anyone born after 1950 the rigidity and the apparent invincibility of the Old Order that prevailed when the Queen came to the throne in February 1952. At its heart was a class system of hideous complexity, its subtle gradations indicated by an infinity of distinctive marks, most obvious in accent and use of language. Astonishingly, even the Labour Party and the trades unions had their own immovable caste system. This was most visible in the endless "demarcation dispute," in which workers should perform what particular job and contributed more than any other factor to the inability of British industry to compete with its continental competitors in the post-war years. It was in the 1950s that the first signs of the free market revolution became apparent, with the foundation of the Institute of Economics Affairs, which so influenced Margaret Thatcher. Whatever else she may have done—or undone—she freed this country of all these restrictions and provided us with a labour force far more flexible—some would say too flexible—than any other country in Western Europe.

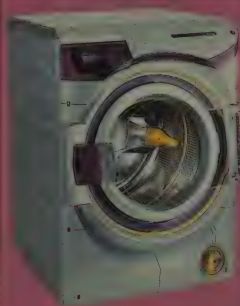
If the workforce was on the brink of change, so too was the young, who until then had kept in their subordinate place. For Britain in 1952, led by the war-time prime minister Winston Churchill, was a pure gerontocracy. Rebelliousness was dampened by two years of compulsory National Service, which ensured that every individual was made fully aware of the power of authority, though once it was abolished in 1960, young people suddenly felt free to criticise their elders. Typically, Charles Handy, the future management guru, was an outstanding recruit for Shell but, in his late 20s, was told that he could not hope for any further promotion until he was nearing his 40th birthday. Today, the situation is reversed, with 40 somethings finding it increasingly difficult to find new jobs.

It was the Coronation, the very moment at which the Old Order showed itself at its most resplendently traditional, its most confident, that marked the beginning of the end of deference and the start of the glories that we associate with the 1960s. Thanks to the insistence of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, the Coronation was televised. The decision gave a colossal boost to what had previously been thought of as a marginal medium, and thus, you would have thought, to the BBC. Not so: within a few months the hundreds of thousands of viewers who had bought sets to watch the live

As society's bounds relaxed, rebellion was in the air especially among the leather-clad early rockers, left. Affordable domestic appliances, the forerunners of today's hi-tech models, below far left, were liberating women from the tedium of domestic chores, while the advent of rock'n'roll led to a growing freedom of expression on the dance floor, below.

# A brave new world

Though the 50s may have dawned rigid and conformist, there lurked beneath the surface the seeds of change that were to affect the rest of the century says Nicholas Faith.





pageantry realised that the great majority of the Corporation's normal programmes were boring beyond belief. As a result, public opinion demanded an alternative—independent, or what the great and the good snootily called "commercial" television.

The Establishment was hostile to the idea precisely because it involved the intrusion of vulgar commercialism, for in those far-off days money was simply not mentioned in polite society. Worse, it did not have to answer to the powers that be. Once independent television actually arrived on air two years later the people of Britain could never again be controlled in the way they had been throughout recent history.

The mood of the times was echoed by a "New Wave" of plays and films ranging from *Lady in a Dressing Gown* to *A Taste of Honey* and *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*. These, for the first time ever, reflected life in Britain as it was and not as a world in which members of the working class were irremediably deferential or comic, their feelings ignored by their "betters" who inevitably occupied centre stage. By the end of the decade it was the upper, rather than the lower, classes who were being automatically depicted as jokey figures, a trend that has gathered momentum over the intervening years.

By 1954, London was waking up from the dingy slumber that had marked the early post-war years and starting to go out and about. A handful of good restaurants opened, a trend encouraged by the abolition of meat rationing that year. This belated step, which also triggered a rash of "steak houses", was the first time that even half-decent restaurant meals had been generally available to all classes of society. They were a symbol of a new mind set: that consumption was good, and what is more, classless. By the end of the decade, indeed, Macmillan could say "you've never had it so good". By 1959 the country's housing was radically improved and these homes were flooded with domestic appliances from fridges to vacuum cleaners and washing machines. Significantly, these were available to all classes, including the better-off manual workers who often earned more than their clerical (and therefore "superior") colleagues.

On a less mundane level, the feeling that the chains of institutional invulnerability were being loosened, and that youth could have its say, was enormously deepened at the end of 1956. This marked the failure of the Suez Adventure—a devastating blow to the notion that Those in Charge Knew What They Were Doing. The resignation of Prime Minister Sir Anthony Eden put an end to the concept of deference to one's elders and betters as part of the received wisdom. Britain's inglorious retreat from Suez was swiftly followed by the abolition of the infamous "fourteen-day rule", which prevented anything that was to be discussed in Parliament from being mentioned on the airwaves

"CLIFF RICHARD WAS, UNBELIEVABLY ENOUGH, CONSIDERED A MORAL DANGER TO SOCIETY."



From far left, it's hard to believe that Cliff Richard (now Sir Cliff and winner of the Eurovision Song Contest) was once considered to be a moral danger to society. Today's bad boys include rapper Eminem, master of the antisocial and offensive lyric. For royalty, duty remained paramount and, in 1955, Princess Margaret, under pressure from the Palace, renounced her wish to marry the divorced Group Captain Peter Townsend. Earlier this year, a more relaxed attitude was apparent when Prince Charles kissed Camilla Parker Bowles in public. Top, in Suez members of the 33rd parachute field regiment moved Naafi stores between camps on a makeshift railway boggy.





"ROBIN DAY, THEN CONSIDERED A REVOLUTIONARY FIGURE, STARTED TO ASK PENETRATING, AWKWARD QUESTIONS."



The 1958 CND march on Whitehall, though orderly, was a serious challenge to the authorities. By the end of the century, anti-capitalists demonstrated their anger by rioting in London, ransacking offices and restaurants.

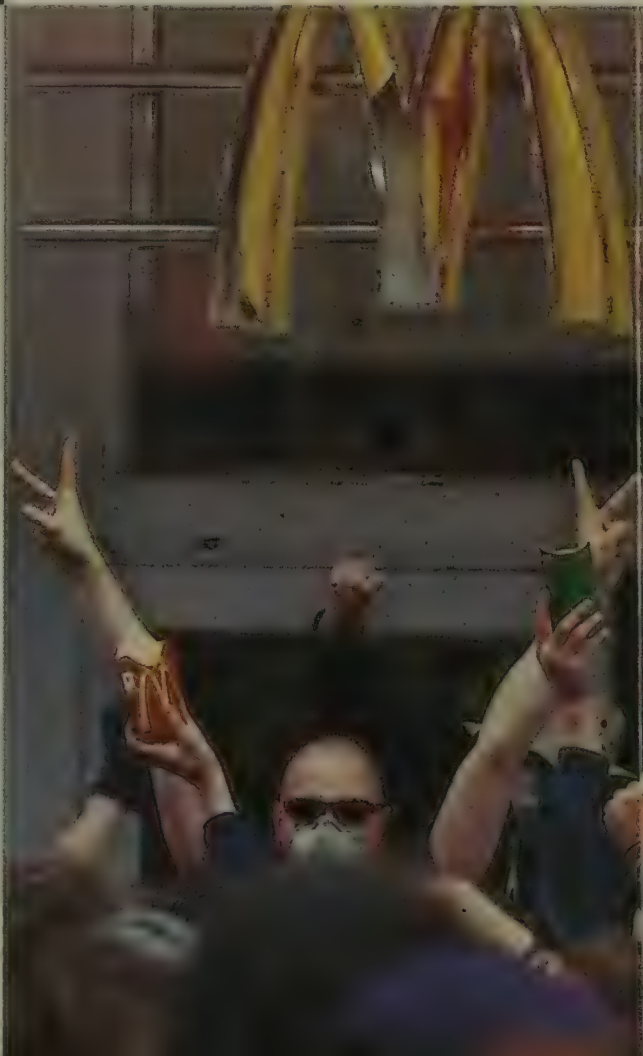
for the previous fortnight. Facilitated by independent television, reporters and news-readers, most obviously the "revolutionary" Robin Day, started to ask penetrating, awkward questions. No one was out of bounds, up to and including the Prime Minister.

Now, royalty, too, began to come under attack. One need only look to Britain's cinemas to see this point underlined: by the end of the decade cinema programmes no longer involved the playing of the National Anthem. In a prescient article published in 1957, Lord Altrincham, son of Churchill's Secretary of War, pointed out, quite rightly, that once the impact of the Queen's youth had worn off she would be increasingly vulnerable to the feeling that she was totally isolated from her subjects.

It was the intellectual and political turmoil resulting from Suez that led to the rise of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, the most fundamental revolt of the 1950s. This was a far more serious challenge to authority than anything seen in the 1960s, being aimed at the heart of British defence and foreign policy. Even before Suez youngsters had begun rebelling against the structures of society. By the late 1950s this had spilled over into pop music, gradually freeing itself from the previous dependence on the Americans. This in turn generated pop programmes on television, starring such newcomers as Cliff Richard, who, unbelievably enough, was considered a moral danger to society.

If there was one creation of the 1950s which more than anything encapsulated the mood of the decade, it was the Mini, far and away the most advanced popular car of its day. Crucially, it marked the arrival of a truly classless vehicle—even Princess Margaret was happy to be seen in one. It heralded the crumbling of the old values, in which the social order was expressed in your choice of motor, from Ford up through the Hillman, the Rover, the Humber, the Jaguar and the Roller. How appropriate, then, that a half-century on this symbol of 1950s change and vigour should be reincarnated—and that this small, democratic vehicle should still send out all the right messages now that so many of the aspirations and ideals of half a century ago are back in focus again.

NICHOLAS FAITH'S book, *A Very Different Country—a Typically British Revolution* will be published by Christopher Sinclair-Stevenson in February 2002.





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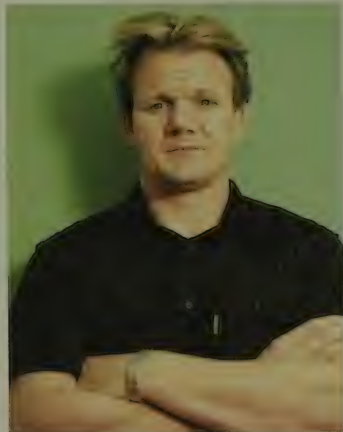




# A look back at anger

Post-war Britain of the 50s spawned literature's angry young men, who gave voice to a generation and paved the way for the social revolution of the 60s. Nicholas Foulkes asks why today's writers and artists no longer rail against society's iniquities

Above, Albert Finney in the gritty and realistic *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*. Above right, chef Gordon Ramsay who is famed for his angry outbursts.



IT IS DIFFICULT to think back to the Britain of the 1950s; it existed in a world so different from our own. It was a country battered by war and, depending on your viewpoint, either drab and conformist or cosy and comforting. It was not the great nation that it had been in the preceding century. Once the world superpower, now little more than a mere spectator on international events, Britain was shedding its former imperial possessions with a speed that struck some as unseemly.

One view was that the country needed backbone, and in 1953 a former Royal Navy Commander called Ian Fleming produced it in the form of James Bond, protagonist of a novel called *Casino Royale*. Of this publishing event Anthony Burgess was to write "when *Casino Royale* appeared in 1953, it had a message for the British people. Tough, brave, and yet no cold-bath ascetic, Bond reminded his readers of qualities they seemed to have lost. Eight years after the end of World War II, the age of great heroes who had built and sustained an empire was long over. Now instead we had the backings and intrigues of the superpowers. The situation was humiliating."

To judge from the success of Fleming's novels and the subsequent phenomenal popularity of the James Bond films, there was an appetite for this literary yingism, with its evocation of a world of panache, offices and smart St James's clubs, from which men called forth to save the world with little more than a handgun and a lot of upper-middle-class English sang-froid. Consciously or not, Fleming was echoing the "Dr Livingstone I presume" school of cool upon which an empire had been built. However, not everyone could identify with the suave, sophisticated Commander Bond, a literary hero whose main worry, as he admits in *Casino Royale*, is "not how to get enough caviar, but how to get enough toast with it". Caviar was not in the plentiful supply that Bond fondly imagined and an increasing number of people were no longer prepared to seek relief from the quotidian mundanity of their lives in the far-fetched, world-saving, derring-do of 007.

At around the same time as Fleming was inventing his fictional espionage hero, Kingsley Amis was creating an entirely new type of character, Jim Dixon, a man propelled by his education into the cosy bourgeois world of a job in the history department of one of the red-brick universities that were sprouting around the country. Amis' 1964 novel *Lucky Jim* was to capture the beginnings of social realism in the class-conscious Britain of the 50s: a social realism that





would explode on to the stage a couple of years later. In 1956, Jim Dixon was joined by Jimmy Porter, the protagonist of the play *Look Back in Anger*. It premiered at the Royal Court in May 1956 and rapidly set the tone for the house style of this Chelsea Theatre: gritty, realistic, splenetic and frequently nihilistic. While James Bond was swigging champagne and seducing women, Jimmy Porter was watching his wife do the ironing. "God how I hate Sundays!" he explodes. "It's always so depressing, always the same. We never seem to get any further do we? Always the same ritual. Reading the papers, drinking tea, ironing. A few more hours, and another week gone. Our youth is slipping away." Later in the play Porter comes out with a chilling condemnation of the world as he saw it. "There aren't any good, brave causes left. If the big bang does come, and we all get killed off, it won't be in aid of the old-fashioned, grand design. It'll just be for the Brave New-nothing-very-much-thank-you." It was certainly a change from the diet of Noel Coward, Terence Rattigan, and JB Priestley that theatregoers were used to.

Porter was the creation of John Osborne, a man in his late 20s. In the second volume of his memoirs, Osborne summed up how he and many others felt about the status quo at that time. "The country was tired, not merely from the sacrifice of two back-breaking wars, but from the defeat and misery between them. The bits of red on the map were disappearing and the names we knew on mixed packets of postage stamps were erased. Like so much else, it all happened without anyone being very aware of it. The leaping hare of the Victorian imagination had begun to imitate the tortoise even before 1914, but in that summer of 1955, it was still easy enough to identify what we regarded as a permanent Establishment." After

initial poor reviews Kenneth Tynan announced: "I don't think I could love anybody who didn't love *Look Back in Anger*." It soon became a huge hit, making its author a star and giving rise to the term, "angry young men". It was a press officer at the Royal Court who came up with this masterly media cliché and, however broad such a term was, it did encapsulate the views of the time.

Born in 1929, and too young to have served in the war, Osborne was one of the most articulate voices of a generation that was not prepared to sink back into the tea-and-tradition-laden torpor of 1950s Britain. At the beginning of the 1950s it must have seemed as though Britain had gone back to the future. The Festival of Britain was a conscious evocation of the Great Exhibition of the previous century. The position of the monarchy, which had looked so parlous in the 1930s with the abdication crisis, was reaffirmed with the coronation of a young, beautiful queen. And, after a brief flirtation with the socialism of the bespectacled Mr Attlee, Sir Winston Churchill, a man who had seen the last cavalry charge of the British army and had experienced the Boer War, moved back into Number 10 Downing Street. It probably appeared to men of Osborne's generation, the kitchen-sink dramatists such as Wesker and Delaney as well as the so-called angry young men such as Kingsley Amis, Alan Sillitoe and Colin Wilson, that this hegemony of the Establishment would last forever.

In 1956, the angry young men were back in a collection of essays called *Declaration*. Edited by Tom Maschler, this book gave voice to the views that "a number of young and widely opposed writers have burst upon the scene and are striving to change many of the values which have held good in recent years". Among the angry young men

PERHAPS THE  
MOST  
GENUINELY  
ANGRY YOUNG  
MAN TODAY IS  
A WOMAN.





Richard Burton played the original angry young man, Jimmy Porter, in the film version of John Osborne's play, *Look Back in Anger*, above left. The angry young men of the noughties: the Chapman brothers, top, and Tracey Emin, above, whose controversial art both horrifies and delights.

to contribute was Doris Lessing, who in her late 30s showed that you needed to be neither young nor male to be an angry young man. She wrote that British life was "petty and frustrating" and that its people seemed content "to sink into ever-greater depths of genteel poverty". Lindsay Anderson, who would find considerable fame as a filmmaker and counter-culture hero, wrote that after spending time on the Continent, "coming back to Britain is always something of an ordeal" saying that "coming back to Britain is also in many respects, like going back to the nursery". It was clear that this new generation of young firebrands was ready to break out of the nursery.

However, Kingsley Amis was already seeking to distance himself from the angry young men: "I hate all this Pharisical twittering about the 'state of our civilisation' and I suspect anyone who wants to buttonhole me about my 'role in society'". This book is likely to prove a valuable addition to the cult of the Solemn Young Men; I predict a great success for it," was Amis' response upon being asked to contribute to *Declaration*. Having pricked the pomposity of one social orthodoxy with his delicious satire *Lucky Jim*, Amis did not want to get involved with another, and in retrospect it is possible to see that once the angry young men had rattled the Establishment cage, they settled into a cosy pattern of their own. Books, then films or books, depicting disaffected lower-middle or working-class heroes inveighing against organised society, or getting their own back on it, flooded bookshops and cinema screens: among the most interesting examples are *Room at the Top* and *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*. It was as if by the end of the decade the angry young men had done their work. They were, in a way, the shock troops of the revolution that would come during the 60s. In the main they used the bourgeois media of literature and theatre to attack prevailing mores; in the decade that was to come, less elitist and more experimental media—pop art, music and cinema—would take the lead in harassing the Establishment.

It is perhaps an interesting comment on how successful the angry young men were, that their work seems so dated now. *The Observer* once described Kingsley Amis' 1960 novel *Take a Girl Like You* as "incendiary stuff"; four decades later it was adapted for television by the BBC as a charming period piece. It is perhaps fitting, if not entirely fair, that a new generation of ironic young men, not in the least bit angry but more concerned with wearing the right labels, know of John Osborne only as the suave, stately-home-dwelling gangster he played in the cult classic of crime cinema *Get Carter*, and might have vaguely heard of Kingsley Amis in his role as Martin's dad.

Indeed, what passes for high literary culture in the UK today can be so self-referential as to be baffling to the lay consumer. One either has to endure self-consciously "literary" novels written to please a small cosy coterie of North London chums, or immediately disposable fiction written about the traumas of reaching one's 30s or 40s and not finding personal fulfilment. A generation or two ago these authors would have been railing against the iniquities of society; now they are recycling their London lives, wrestling with problems that are often self-inflicted. This is not to say that the novels they put out are inferior

pieces of work; writers such as Simon Mills, Nick Hornby and Tony Parsons are masters of their craft, it is just that they eschew the broader issues and concentrate instead on what Mills calls "the ups, the downs, the highs, the lows of living in an intensely superficial world and making a journey of self-discovery".

On the stage, Patrick Marber, more a thirtysomething chronicler of the self-invented problems of the neo-bourgeois, North London intelligentsia, than an actual angry young man, dresses up his satirical entertainments with strong language and references to bodily functions. However, this linguistic window dressing does not disguise the lack of any real target for Marber's curare-dipped barbs. There is very little left to be angry about with any safety. The "real" issues, such as terrorism, religious intolerance and the unfair distribution of wealth, are far too fraught with moral landmines to be tackled on stage, even by someone as talented as Marber. Tellingly, Marber's play *Dealer's Choice* focused on a restaurant, haunt of some of today's most incendiary figures—Angry Young Chefs in the Gordon Ramsay style.

The problem is that the portion of the public that consumes what passes for highbrow culture these days, expects to be challenged by the works they are presented with. And the most obvious cultural conduits for anger are the sorts of canvases, sculptures and installations that make their way into such exhibitions as the Sensation show at the Royal Academy—names such as Jake and Dinos Chapman spring to mind. But so seismic has been the shift in social mores that what is initially seen as shocking soon becomes decoration for the homes of the chattering classes who think they are being radical.

Perhaps the most genuinely angry young man of today is a woman, Tracey Emin. I have heard Ms Emin speak at the ICA and found her vitriolic polemic against the media oddly moving, if slightly quaint. It also helps to know that she is a willing participant in the media circus with a column in *GQ*, and if anyone's art has made the transition from Highgate to High Street it Emin's: some dismiss it as meretricious rubbish, others see in it subtle social commentary, but it is always a talking point.

However, Emin is a rarity in an increasingly culturally homogenised world. It is, of course, popular cinema that has pasteurised intellectual life. This is not a new trend. It was noticed over 25 years ago by the same Kenneth Tynan who helped launch the angry young men. "The most powerful influence on arts in the West is—the cinema. Novels, plays and films are filled with references to, quotations from, parodies of—old movies. They dominate the cultural subconscious because we absorb them in our formative years (as we don't absorb books for instance); and we see them again on TV when we grow up."

Tynan wrote this remarkably prescient entry in his diary in October 1975 and it explains most eloquently why, although we no longer can really claim to have any angry young men, our appetite for the exploits of James Bond seems undiminished.

**NICHOLAS FOULKES** writes for a number of magazines and newspapers, including the *Financial Times* and the *Evening Standard*.



# Designs of the Times

The decade that followed the dark years of war was one of change on an unprecedented scale. Stephen Bayley examines the icons that live on from those days of hot cars and cool music.

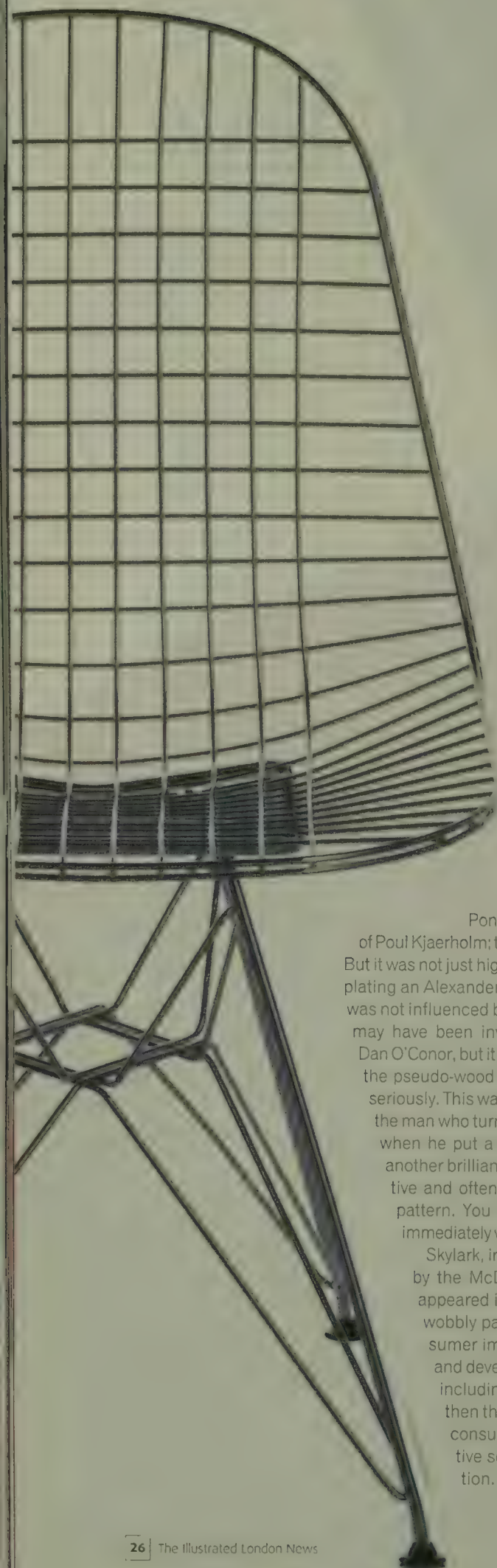
A product of Harley Earl's design team at General Motors, the 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air, with two-tone paint and elegant tailfins, was to become one of the most prized collectors' cars.

CAN DECADES have a character all their own? Yes, they certainly can and the 50s does so more than most. It was what Tom Wolfe called America's "Bourbon Louis Rump"; never had there been such confidence, such abundance or such prospects of ever-increasing prosperity. And never had there been so many cars. In the United States the new freeway system literally opened up the country and funnelled all those millions of De Soto's, Dodges, Lincolns and Chevies on the road to nowhere. 1958 was the year when American automobile production reached its all time peak.

The 50s was a decade when past and present were in exquisite balance, when many of the architectural and literary monuments to our civilisation were made, or their creators died. It was a decade of exceptional achievement and of elegiac transitions, some of them financial. It was in 1950 that a New York financier called Frank McNamara created Diners Club, the original credit card, when he found himself embarrassingly short of funds in a Manhattan restaurant. So our world changed. Then, realistic, long distance, commercial air travel became available, inspiring a columnist known pseudonymously as Cholly Knickerbocker to coin, in 1960, the expression "jet set" in the *New York Journal*. Just 30 years before his predecessor had given us the term "rate society". The qualifier is significant: in a café you are sedentary, in a jet you are on the move.

The jet set certainly had plenty of symbols of movement, but perhaps the atom itself seems the most significant. At once symbolic of technical ambition and Cold War anxiety, it appeared in architecture, in wallpaper patterns and in lighting fixtures. It turned up





everywhere. And there were other unforgettable objects and images as well: the architecture of Gio Ponti and Eero Saarinen; the furniture of Poul Kjaerholm; the music of Elvis and Chuck Berry. But it was not just high art: who is to say, when contemplating an Alexander Calder mobile, that the sculptor was not influenced by decorative laminates? Formica may have been invented as long ago as 1913 by Dan O'Connor, but it was only in 1950 that it abandoned the pseudo-wood or stone finishes and took itself seriously. This was when designer Brooks Stevens, the man who turned laundry into an entertainment when he put a window in a washing machine, another brilliant 50s conceit, created the distinctive and often-copied Skylark, or Boomerang, pattern. You recognise the swirls and loops immediately when you see them now.

Skylark, in turn, had possibly been inspired by the McDonald double arches that first appeared in 1948. So much did the wibbly-wobbly pattern cement itself into the consumer imagination that it was worked on and developed by designer after designer, including Nettie Hart of Raymond Loewy, then the world's most influential design consultancy. Thus, in the 50s, a decorative scribble became an artistic tradition. To prove he was not restricted to

having designs on plastic laminates or doing laundry voyeurism, in 1958, Brooks Stevens created the Harley Davidson DuoGlide.

Europe had its jet set too. One morning in 1956, film producer Roberto Rossellini, perhaps wearing a beautiful Brioni suit, left home in Rome to drive his open Ferrari 250MM (the very same car with bodywork by Vignale that he had recently raced in the Mille Miglia) to Barcelona to visit his mother. He stopped in Monte-Carlo for a tune-up and also to see his friend Princess Grace, who was to give birth to Princess Caroline on January 23, 1957. A little way down the coast and the year before, Brigitte Bardot had helped to popularise *bronzage*, bikinis and St-Tropez when she starred in Roger Vadim's sun-and-sex celebration of the Côte d'Azur, *Et Dieu Créa la Femme*.

Hampshire was not left out. It was on February 5, 1956 that rock 'n' roll arrived in Britain when the liner carrying Bill Haley and the Comets docked in Southampton. The guitars the band would have been using were a perfect symbol of the sound of (rock) music and a 50s archetype: the 1954 Fender Stratocaster, with tremolo arm, was a development of the 1948 Fender Broadcaster, a design of Leo Fender and George Fullerton that was the world's first solid-bodied electric guitar. Without this iconic 50s shape and trademark amplified sound, the evolution of pop would have taken a completely different route.

And then there were tall buildings. In 1958 the patrician architect Philip Johnson was overseeing the





## NO ONE HAS EVER MADE A BETTER CHAIR. IT REMINDS YOU OF AN ENGLISH CLUB CLASSIC, BUT IT LOOKS TO THE FUTURE.

completion of Mies van der Rohe's Seagram Building: 525ft tall in steel and tinted glass with hand-cast l-section bronze beams, this magnificent Park Avenue "elegant monument to nothingness", in Lewis Mumford's interpretation, was and remains the most beautiful of skyscrapers: austere, dignified, impressive, an elegant and timeless monument to benign capitalism and Bauhaus belief systems.

Inside the very same Seagram Building the abstract expressionist Mark Rothko was commissioned to paint a series of sombre, brooding canvases (now in Tate Modern) for the Four Seasons restaurant. Abstract art was never better than it was in the late 50s. Although, not long before Rothko painted his melancholy canvases, the world lost another depressive painter when, on Fireplace Road, Long Island, in the Hamptons, Jackson Pollock died in a car crash after a drinking binge. As with James Dean, who died in 1955 when his Porsche 550RSK Spyder hit a Ford pick-up in the Californian desert, Pollock's early and reckless death secured his reputation and created an ineffable symbol of the age.

Meanwhile, as the finishing touches were being made to the Seagram Building, another modernist architect, Eliot Noyes, a tweedy, Harvard type with a Porsche and a Land Rover and a beautiful house next door to Philip Johnson's own home in leafy and sun-dappled New Canaan, Connecticut, was working on a new job for his old pal Thomas Watson of IBM. Watson had told Noyes the whole of the mighty IBM Corporation needed redesigning. Noyes agreed, and memorably said of this

pioneering corporate identity programme: "You would prefer neatness." One thing Noyes immediately decided was that IBM products required a consistent appearance and colour. He painted a mainframe blue and put it on show in the window of Saks of Fifth Avenue. The public was awed by the whirr and click of the spinning tapes: Big Blue, which remains IBM's nickname, was born.

The same decade also produced the modest consumer products that helped define customer expectations in the years ahead. One day, in 1955, a quiet Japanese travelling salesman, Akio Morita, representing Tokyo Tsushin Kogyo Kabushiki Kaisha, checked into a drab hotel in New York. It was his first visit to the United States since 1951 when he spent a week researching neglected patents in the Library of Congress. He was carrying with him a consignment of his factory's latest products, a new type of radio that he was having some difficulty selling to department stores. When the entire consignment was stolen, the resulting publicity created avid consumer demand for his curious product. Morita-san, mindful of America's difficulty with awkward names, changed Tokyo Tsushin Kogyo Kabushiki Kaisha to Sony in 1958 and the transistor boom began.

While Akio Morita was realising the potential of miniature radios, the greatest car designer of the century, Harley Earl (inventor of two-tone paint and the tailfin) was still hard at work in Detroit in the Technical Center, which the Finnish architect, Eero Saarinen (who designed the bird-like TWA Terminal at Kennedy Airport) built for him. Earl's job as creative leader was to jack up

**Far left, produced in 1951 by Charles and Ray Eames, the wire chair was strong yet lightweight. In 1956, the Eames went on to make the classic lounge chair and ottoman, above, which Charles Eames wanted to have "the warm, receptive look of a well-used first baseman's mitt". Above left, the monumental simplicity of Mies van der Rohe's Seagram Building in Manhattan.**





Above left, *Light Red Over Black* by abstract expressionist Mark Rothko. Above centre, the Mini One, an updated design released in 2001 based on the original 1959 model. Right, the Fender Stratocaster, virtually unchanged since 1954.



the imaginations of his designers and the cupidity of his customers, year-on-year, using any inspiration that came to him. Once he tore sheets of pictures of jet fighters from a magazine and said to a young draughtsman working on, say, an Oldsmobile door handle, "Do this!" He did. Earl invented brand management, giving precise characters to each of GM's five divisions. He seemed instinctively to have understood consumer psychology and exploited all the symbolism of sex, colour, motor-racing and space in his car designs. The Corvette of 1953 was, perhaps, his masterpiece: a gorgeously vulgar sports car, memorably described as "the most fun you can have with your clothes on". Earl's restless need for annual design changes led critics to condemn "planned obsolescence". Harley Earl preferred more optimistically to call it the "dynamic economy".

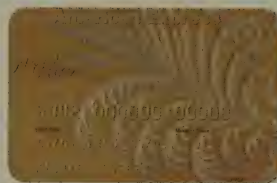
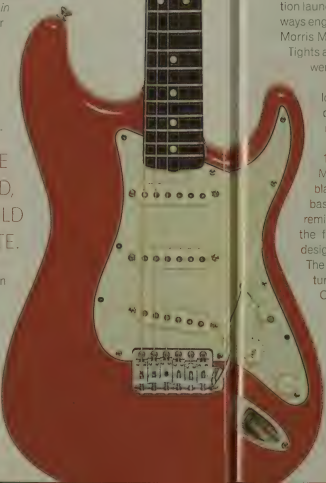
And in those early, dynamic, jet set days Harley Earl was among the first passengers on Boeing's radical, swept-wing 707. It was an inaugural passenger run and Earl was filmed eating a banana in flight near the speed of sound. This particular 707 was painted in a very 50s colour scheme of toffee and custard. By 1958, when the 707 was in transatlantic service, Earl used one to get to Luton, Bedfordshire, where the local GM designers at Vauxhall were working on the Cresta, a toned-down version of the stateside Earl original, a sort of insipid Cliff to an erotic Elvis. That was the way of the 50s.

But English culture had its own special strengths. In 1956 at The Royal Court Theatre, Sloane Square, John Osborne astonished the critics and the public with his disturbing and interperate play *Look Back in Anger*. In 1957, a British Racing Green Jaguar D-Type won the Vingt-Quatre Heures du Mans for the fifth time for the make, raising the morale of a motor-racing world still horrified by the Marques de Portago's crash that had recently killed 14 people in the Mille Miglia. In Europe, almost simultaneously, Albert Camus won the Nobel prize for Literature; a semi-

## WITHOUT THE ICONIC 50S SHAPE AND TRADEMARK AMPLIFIED SOUND, THE EVOLUTION OF POP WOULD HAVE TAKEN A VERY DIFFERENT ROUTE.

iterate Romanian sculptor called Constantin Brancusi died in Paris and The Treaty of Rome was signed. Unaware of the world outside his own *hôtel particulier*, Yves Saint-Laurent made his first couture gown.

And then something more significant still happened: in 1959 Glen Raven Mills of North Carolina introduced Panti-Legs—self-supporting hosiery, or what



Conceived in 1950, the Diners Club card, top, was the precursor to Alexander McQueen's limited-edition credit card, above.

we would call tights. Here was a consumer product that changed manners and morals and fashion like no other. In August the same year, the old British Motor Corporation launched an odd little car with tiny wheels, a side-wings engine and a gearbox in the sump. They called it Morris Mini Minor, but soon it just became the Mini. Tights and short skirts? This reminds us that the 50s were the beginning of the 60s.

You could not write such a breathless catalogue of products and events about any decade other than the 50s. But now I am going to indulge in some e-commerce and buy a Charles Eames chair and ottoman: the one produced in 1956 by Herman Miller of Zeeland, Michigan. Model 670/671. It's got moulded plywood shells, black leather cushions and a polished aluminium base. No one has ever made a better chair; it reminds you of an English club classic, but looks to the future. It's typical of the period, originally designed for Eddie Fisher to eat his potato chips in. The year after this famous chair was first manufactured, the space race began and Russia's Sputnik One crossed America every 90 minutes.

STEPHEN BAYLEY, one of the world's leading commentators on modern culture, is the author of many books and catalogues. His latest book, *Sex*, is published by Cassell. To view and buy classic 50s furniture, visit [www.manicha.demon.co.uk/eames.html](http://www.manicha.demon.co.uk/eames.html).

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# There is *always* something to celebrate!



Though less famous than the ubiquitous cigar, Churchill's fondness for the highest quality bubbly is also well-documented. "Champagne imparts a feeling of exhilaration," he said. "The nerves are braced, the imagination is equally stirred; the wits become more nimble." Since 1908, Pol Roger was his tippable of choice. During the war its powers of invigoration were often called upon. To commemorate the fact, there is a pint-sized bottle of 1928 vintage on display in the Cabinet War Rooms.

## Churchill and the champagne blonde

After the war, a close friendship developed between Churchill and Odette Pol-Roger of the champagne dynasty. While there is no suggestion of scandal, a mild flirtation was pursued throughout the 1950s until Churchill's death in 1965.

On November 11, 1944, Churchill was the guest of Lady Diana Cooper at the British Embassy's Armistice Day party in Paris. In an inspired piece of seating, he was placed next to Mme Pol-Roger, who was not only one of the most stylish women in Paris, but also the grande dame of champagne. And not just any champagne, but the prime minister's favourite brand. It was no surprise that they got on, but no one anticipated quite how well they

RAF badge throughout the German occupation of Epernay. And she was Anglophile in other respects: her hobbies were gardening and fly-fishing.

As well as meeting regularly in Paris, she carried on a lively correspondence with her famous English admirer. Every year on his birthday she sent him a case of his favourite drink—the 1928 vintage—until supplies ran out in 1953. In return for this annual generosity he sent a copy of his memoirs inscribed "Cuvée de Réserve—mise en bouteille au Château Chartwell".

In 1952, he paid her the ultimate compliment of naming one of his favourite racehorses after her, and invited her to Brighton to see it run. It lost, but a few champagne corks were popped anyway. The next year it won the Black Prince Stakes at Kempton Park on the day of the Queen's coronation: a double excuse for a celebration.

Sir Winston always meant to visit the Pol-Roger family at their Epernay mansion, which he called "the world's most drinkable address". Unfortunately public obligations prevented him, and so it remained an unfulfilled dream. When he died, the Pol-Roger family paid a lasting tribute: for 25 years the label of every bottle imported to Britain was bordered in black.

Also, 10 years after his death, the first Sir Winston Churchill Cuvée was born. Produced from the classic 1975 vintage, it is one of the greatest prestige cuvées of modern times. Launched in 1984 at Blenheim Palace, it has been succeeded by seven further vintages.



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would hit it off. He gave the ambassador instructions that she should be invited to dinner every time he came to Paris.

Part of her charm lay in her role in the local resistance. She worked as a courier, cycling for 12 hours from Epernay to Paris. And she was known for her defiant, fearless style of resistance—she openly wore an

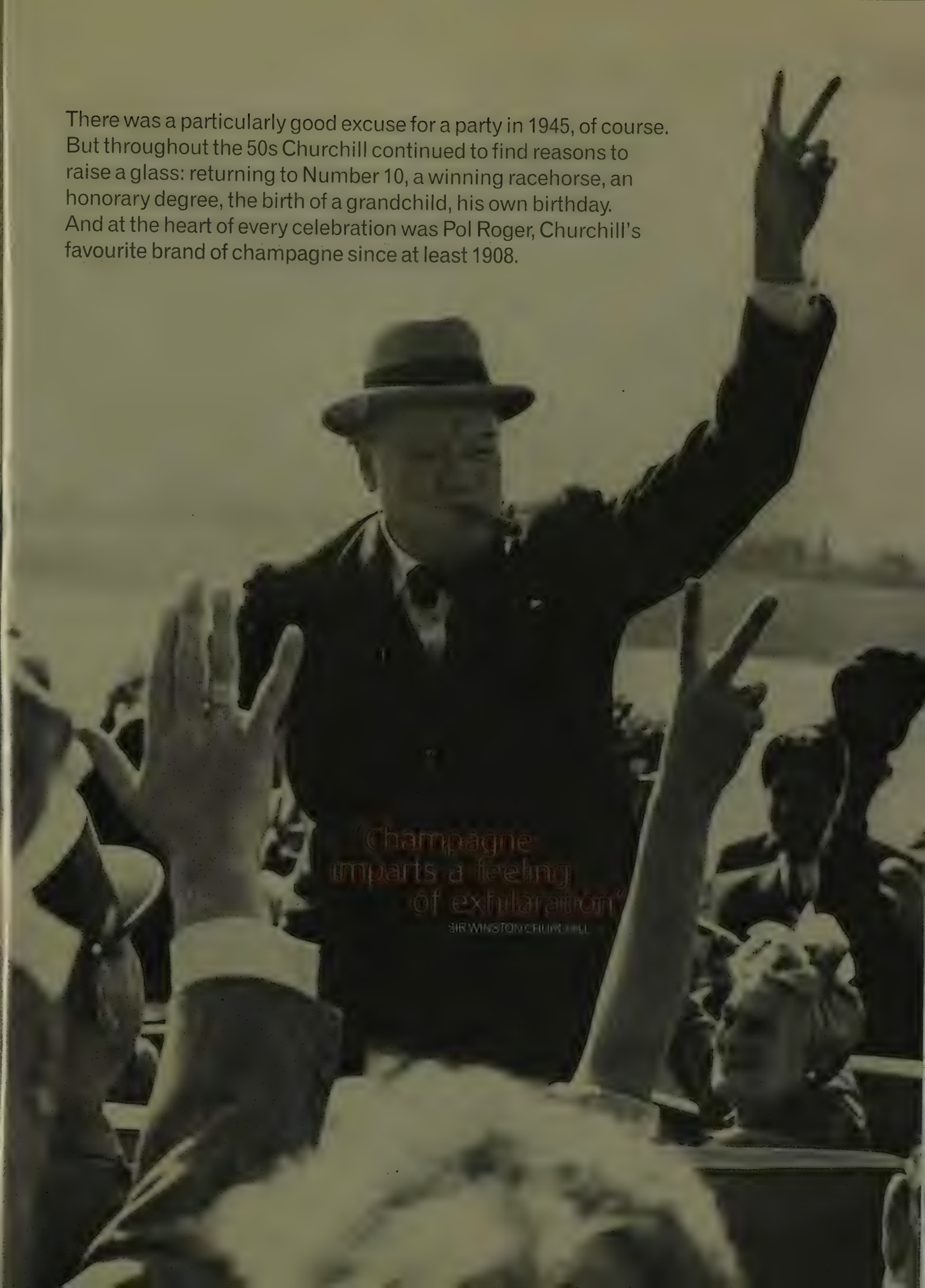
The Winston Churchill Cuvée 1993 was launched in June 2001 to the high acclaim of champagne connoisseurs. It is a racy, elegant vintage with a fresh, inviting nose and a deep, full palate which combines the sweetness of marron glacé with a refreshing acidity. Thanks to this new vintage, the names of Sir Winston Churchill and Pol-Roger will remain united in the coming century.



There was a particularly good excuse for a party in 1945, of course. But throughout the 50s Churchill continued to find reasons to raise a glass: returning to Number 10, a winning racehorse, an honorary degree, the birth of a grandchild, his own birthday. And at the heart of every celebration was Pol Roger, Churchill's favourite brand of champagne since at least 1908.

"Champagne  
imparts a feeling  
of exhilaration"

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL







## London comes clean

Londoners may feel that their capital grows ever more polluted but, surprisingly, some things have improved markedly since the dark days of 1952's Great Smog, reports Fred Pearce.

NOBODY REALISED at first what had happened. There were no bodies on the streets when the great London smog of December 1952 engulfed the capital in a thick, sulphurous mixture of fog and smoke. "One of the first indications was that undertakers were running out of coffins and florists out of flowers," remembered Robert Waller, who at the time was a medical researcher at St Bartholomew's Hospital. "Only later was it realised that the number of deaths per day during the smog was three or four times higher than normal. Nothing like this had ever happened before."

On December 5 a trick of the weather clamped a lid over London. The pollution belching from millions of coal-burning chimneys was unable to disperse on the winds or rise into the atmosphere. It soon became so thick that the sun could not break through and clear

it. The smog gradually worsened and grew, until it stretched for 20 miles in every direction from the centre of town, before winds finally came and blew it away.

London became pitch black at noon. Newspaper reports of the time reveal a twilight world in which a Sadler's Wells performance was abandoned when the theatre filled with smoke. With headlights useless, traffic all but ceased, and fire engines only travelled with relaying escorts. Burglary was rampant.

By the time winds arrived five days later to blow the smog away down the estuary into the North Sea, the cloud contained an estimated 500 tonnes of smoke and similar volumes of sulphur dioxide, a gas that turned moisture in the air as acid as a car battery. It left behind more than 4,000 dead. In its deadly embrace the elderly, the young and those with lung and heart



THE SMOG OF 1952 WAS A TRICK OF THE WEATHER. BUT IT WAS A DEADLY TRICK. PHOTOGRAPH BY JONATHAN WINTER





diseases were particularly susceptible. They choked on mucus from bronchial tubes irritated by the smoke, succumbing either through lack of oxygen or heart attacks as they fought for breath.

There had been smogs before, of course. Dickens' books are full of them. They were the backdrop to the deeds of Sherlock Holmes and Jack the Ripper, and one of the Impressionists' inspirations—Monet came to London each December especially to experience them. But the Great Smog of 1952 went down in history as the worst air-pollution disaster recorded anywhere in the world, and the worst peacetime week in London's history.

According to the report of the official inquiry, published two years later, at its height people had been dying faster than during the cholera epidemic in London a century earlier. In Camberwell, the daily death rate rose from five to 50. In Deptford, applications for death certificates were nine times the normal, in Southall seven times and in Finsbury and Chingford five times. Inquiry chairman Sir Hugh Beaver commented that it "must, in truth, be a supreme example of the way in which a metropolis of 8 million people can experience a disaster of this size without being conscious all the while of its occurrence".

The events of that week were a turning point in London's, and the nation's, attitude to pollution. It led directly to the passage of a series of Clean Air Acts that imposed bans on burning smoky coal in London and, eventually, most other urban areas across Britain. The arrival of North Sea gas and central heating secured the victory for the city's air. The last great smog occurred in 1962, when an estimated 750 people died.

It is easy to forget the events of that time when we complain about the occasional smogs of today. They are thin affairs compared to the thick, yellowish pea-soupers of the past, when you literally could not see the hand in front of your face. Average smoke levels in central London today are less than one hundredth those at the

height of the Great Smog, a tenth those of the 1950s, and probably below those of Elizabethan times.

But the Great Smog provides an important lesson. Things can, and sometimes do, get better. We have the ability to improve, as well as destroy, our environment. Perhaps issues that today seem intractable—such as global warming—will in 50 years time seem as remote and easily solved as the great smogs proved to be. Maybe cities such as London—rich in resources and skills, and with demanding citizens—are leading the way in showing the world how to cope with environmental perils.

Hopefully so, but we should not be complacent. For our own, modern air pollution, while less visible, may be almost as insidious as its predecessors. London's air today is fouled not by coal smoke pouring from a million grates but by exhaust fumes from millions of vehicles, their noxious emissions including carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone and fine smoke particles.

This cocktail is also dangerous. When Jan Poloniecki of St George's Hospital Medical School in south London examined 370,000 admissions to the capital's hospitals for circulatory diseases in 1997, he found that the number increased markedly the day after a surge in pollution. Today's pollution also seems to be associated with a noticeable increase in severe asthmatic attacks.

The most lethal modern pollutant is probably the tiny smoke particles from the diesel engines of the city's buses, trucks and taxis, which contain cancer-causing chemicals such as benzo-a-pyrenes. Estimates suggest they kill 2,000 or more Londoners each year. Air-quality standards set by doctors for the most deadly particles, PM10s, are exceeded in London boroughs such as Kensington and Camden for between one and three months a year, more than for any other pollutant.

Like London's air, the capital's river reached a nadir during the 1950s as post-war reconstruction took precedence over environmental concerns. Victorian sewerage

**Previous pages, Ludgate Circus at 2pm on December 12, 1952. The Great Smog of that year saw London engulfed in a thick blanket of fog and smoke that lasted five days and left more than 4,000 dead. Above right, nowadays, many cyclists wear masks to minimise the danger posed by the less visible, but equally dangerous, emissions from car exhausts. Some areas of London are thriving, however. Above, 40 hectares of old Thames Water reservoirs in Barnes have been turned into a wetland sanctuary, which has become a haven for wildlife, including voles, inset previous page, and barnacle geese, above left.**





#### **SOME THINGS HAVE IMPROVED**

**Both the River Thames and London's air are much cleaner than 50 years ago, even though problems remain.**

**Sulphur dioxide in London air:**  
**Peak of 1952 Great Smog:** 4,500 micrograms per cubic metre  
**Average level in 1950s:** 300 micrograms per cubic metre  
**Average levels today:** 30 micrograms per cubic metre

**Oxygen in River Thames:**  
 1950s: 40%  
 1990s: 70%

LEFT: PA PHOTOS; CENTRE LEFT AND FAR LEFT: MARTIN S. KIDWORTHY; METLAND CENTRE

works had been installed after the cholera epidemic of the 1850s and a notorious "great stink" on the river in 1858. The capital's raw sewage was steered out into a distant estuary. By the 1950s, however, London was overwhelmed with sewage and industrial effluent floating up and down with the tide. The Thames was dead. The city had turned its back on the open sewer in its midst. But just as plans were devised to clean the air, so money was invested in new sewage treatment works. The result has been a transformation as great as that of the city's air.

Oxygen levels in the River Thames—a good indicator of its health—have almost doubled since the 1950s, and on most days it is cleaner than it has been in over a century. Salmon swim in it regularly, and even dolphins drop by. The Environment Agency, which polices the river's health, has now recorded 118 species of fish in the tidal river, of which around 50 are resident and the rest visitors. Even so, things still go wrong. In July 2001, rains after a dry spell filled the river with so much effluent that oxygen levels ran low. Hundreds of thousands of flounder fry suffocated between Chiswick and central London, and roach and perch died in Chelsea Harbour.

The big news from the harbour is that, these days, people will pay handsomely to live near the river rather than fleeing to avoid its odours. The same can't be said for the Thames' many tributaries, however. The Fleet and Effra, Tyburn and Westbourne, Wandle and Ravensbourne, and many more, have been dubbed "the lost rivers of London". Culverted and canalised, buried and diverted, concreted over and, in one case, diverted by a pipe through an underground station, they barely merit our attention.

A few attempts to give London back its rivers are under way. Residents of Greenwich and Lewisham are campaigning for the return of the Quaggy. The Wandle, which once powered more mills than many a Yorkshire town, also has its fervent friends. But reviving these lost rivers remains unfinished business for the capital in the next

**"WE HAVE THE ABILITY TO IMPROVE, AS WELL AS DESTROY, OUR ENVIRONMENT."**

50 years. Perhaps by 2050 we'll be able to boat on the Fleet as it flows from Hampstead Heath to its mouth by Blackfriars Bridge or picnic beside the Falcon as it lightens the landscape from Streatham to Battersea.

Improving London's environment is not just about banishing pollution, it's about making it a better place to live. Cigarette smoke is a declining nuisance for the rising proportion of the community who do not smoke. Smokeless cinemas, restaurants and workplaces are a boon for smokers and non-smokers alike.

The physical presence of traffic is another constant threat in all our lives. Two-thirds of the 200 people who die on the capital's roads each year are pedestrians, one of the highest proportions in the world. The risks on our roads are perhaps the main reason why fewer children make their own way to school these days, or are allowed out on their own. The joys of cycling are increasingly proscribed: despite the proliferation of cycle lanes, the number of cycling journeys by children of school age has fallen by 60 per cent in the past decade.

And there is noise. The great majority of the capital's population reports being disturbed by noise frequently. A recent study suggested that noise levels could have increased more than tenfold since the 1950s. Aircraft, road traffic and neighbours all disturb more than 60 per cent of Londoners. Complaints to local councils tripled during the 1990s, while Heathrow flight paths are responsible for widespread sleep disturbance in west London.

But there are areas of tranquillity. Cleaner air and water, plus the re-creation of new green spaces, has seen a return of wildlife to the capital. In one of the most ambitious projects, 40 hectares of old Thames Water reservoirs have been turned into a wetland sanctuary of ponds, reed beds and lagoons in Barnes. This haven for birds, bats and dragonflies has helped turn London into an internationally important centre for waterfowl. According to English Nature, the capital is home to nationally important numbers of cormorants and grebes. At least half of Britain's 16 bat species breed in the capital. And, as the air has cleared, many species of lichen have returned to populate gravestones and old, stone walls.

Bizarrely, too, the dereliction of past industrial land is increasingly a haven for nature. "There is more biodiversity in many derelict urban sites than in any amount of East Anglian prairie," says Michael Breheny, professor at the University of Reading and author of a report on conservation in urban areas from the Town and Country Planning Association. Peter Shirley of the Wildlife Trusts, whose members manage many of the nation's nature reserves, agrees: "Some greenfield sites are sterile, while some urban brownfield sites are incredibly rich."

Take Gargoyle Wharf, a demolished depot on the banks of the Thames in Wandsworth, which was occupied by squatters in the late 90s in protest at plans to build a supermarket there. Ecologist Nick Bertrand of the London Wildlife Trust investigated the site and found more than 300 species of flowering plants. "It was one of the most fantastic sites I've ever been to," he says.

**FRED PEARCE** is environment consultant to *New Scientist* and a regular contributor to *The Independent*, the *Times Higher Education Supplement* and *Country Living*.



# Café Society

Coffee stormed Britain in the 50s as a drink for the hip and cool. Now, once again, as bright, brand cafés crowd our high streets, an espresso to go is still the most stylish drink in town, says Sarah Marsh.

**COFFEE SHOP** incorporated is sweeping across the metropolis, and suddenly, once again, coffee is cool. London's last passionate encounter with caffeine was back in the 50s, but the dim cellars where hip, young things listened to Brubeck, smoked reefers and drank coffee are a far cry from the bright, minimalist "brand cafés" of today.

This new fad, which kicked off in the 90s, is characterised by fierce competition, corporate branding and a robust blend of Italian-Americana. The modern coffee drinker is influenced by fashion and media images, notably the cosy, cosmopolitan atmosphere of Central Perk in *Friends*. Maybe the coffee shop revolution has little to do with coffee at all.

Between 1997 and 2000, the coffee-shop market grew by a staggering 55 per cent. Despite a few hiccups, annual growth is predicted at 22 per cent until saturation point is reached in 2003. To grab this market, Starbucks operates a strategy of high-street penetration. Since 1998, when it opened its inaugural shop in the King's Road, Starbucks has gone on to acquire 211 prime sites—snapping at the heels of Costa Coffee's 240. Have you noticed that where there's a Starbucks, there's sure to be other satellite shops in the vicinity? It's short-term cannibalism in return for long-term market domination. You're also likely to find a Coffee Republic or Café Nero on the same street. Head-on competition and aggressive cluster policy—these are the tactics of coffee wars.

The size and speed in the current growth of coffee culture is surprising. Apart from Tokyo, London is probably the most expensive marketplace in the world to open a coffee bar. Like the estate agents of the 80s, cafés scramble for prime corner sites where prices are astronomical. Starbucks reputedly paid a premium of

£50 million for its first 50 such locations, where rent must be around £200,000 a year. The financial stakes are high, but growth in coffee consumption is second only to mobile phones in the UK. High costs are reflected in a cappuccino costing an impressive £2 upwards. Starbucks forecasts breaking even after eight years but, even so, it will have to sell us a lot of froth to achieve it.

It's easy to be critical of successful corporate branding but it fulfils, or cleverly creates, a need in society. In the 50s we wanted coffee, ciggies and jazz; at the beginning of the millennium we want coffee and chat. We may even talk of grabbing a Costa or meeting for a Starbucks. Branded coffee may not be true coffee in purist terms or even represent value for money, but it delivers consistency of venue and flavour. When a brand is assimilated into our vocabulary, it's surely arrived.

We are suckers for Americana. We've fallen hook, line and sinker for big coffee in the wake of big burgers, big buckets of fries and big shakes. If Starbucks is in-your-face, American style, then Café Nero and Costa have Italian pretensions. Costa, which has successfully franchised its brand to Abbey National, was founded by Sergio and Bruno Costa, immigrants from Palma. An Italian image may prove a crucial difference if the fast-food chains join the coffee scene. Starbucks seems to have successfully smudged the lines between cosy coffee house and chain, but others, such as McDonalds—which opened its first McCoffee in Chicago—are likely to find any international roll-over more difficult.

In the capitals of continental Europe, stand-up coffee bars and pavement cafés are fighting the battle against globalisation, while London has meekly swallowed coffee shop homogenisation. As corporate brands flex their muscles, what chance has the independent coffee shop?







"BRANDED COFFEE IS AS MUCH AN ACCESSORY TO THE MODERN LONDON WORKER AS THE DUFFEL COAT AND SHADES WERE TO THE 1950S BEATNIK."



Above, a generation of freethinkers made it cool to drink coffee in the 50s.

Perhaps the big boys are not such a threat—real coffee lovers will still look for quality. Ultimately, the major brands could be beneficial in introducing people who normally drink instant coffee to the real thing. Just as those who cut their teeth on Australian Chardonnay may move on to Burgundy, so coffee drinkers will graduate.

Individuality versus the branded package. It's a similar situation in the wine trade, with independent merchants versus the multiples. But there is room for both—independent coffee shops are slowly increasing in number at a rate of 1 per cent a year. John Thompson, coffee buyer at Taylors of Harrogate, agrees: "The whole café culture can only be beneficial in the long term."

Today's espresso machine was perfected by Achilles Gaggia in Italy in 1946. Using a spring-powered lever system, he managed to produce a higher pressure than that of steam. In the 50s, Gaggia arrived in London and opened a mocha bar in Frith Street. It was here that

he installed his revolutionary, new espresso machine—and the first coffee bar was born.

In the 40s we were a nation of tea drinkers, but the English cuppa sent out the wrong message to angry young men in the 50s. From the formality of afternoon tea to the image of "tea and sympathy", Britain's traditional brew was suddenly decidedly uncool. Coffee drinking, on the other hand, was a swipe at conventional manners and values. Today, it is equally a statement of fashion and culture.

Cruising the pavement with mobile phone in one hand and bucket of frothy coffee in the other sends out a message of upward mobility and importance—I'm so busy that I must walk, talk and drink at the same time. Branded coffee is as much an accessory to the modern London worker as the duffel coat and shades were to the beatnik. Celluloid images of American professionals buying their morning "coffee to go" have fuelled our habit. Who drinks the percolated office brew today? In the caring 90s, a calmer coffee replaced the slow, simmered rocket fuel that made us jumpy in the 80s.

The venue is as integral to the image as the drink itself. Starbucks appropriated the Central Perk look, but the cosy sofas and newspapers of Costa also sell the *Friends*-style, home-away-from-home atmosphere. Honed to deliver brand consistency, we can feel as comfortable in Portobello as in we do Chelsea. The persuasiveness of the media cannot be understated.

Our climate of therapy offers a perfect environment for the current coffee fad. Caramel mochaccino, for instance, is the ideal antidote to the stresses of metropolitan life—we don't just buy coffee, we buy a prescription tailored to our psychological and physiological needs. A tall, soya, decaffeinated latte with a shot of almond liqueur could be interpreted as, "I suffer from

IBS and migraines and need a nursery drink to soothe my woes. I'd like a proper drink, but it's only 11am."

The ultimate cappuccino-to-go neurotic is the TV soap character Ally McBeal. In the 50s, beatniks and angry young men defied convention, ignoring the British stiff upper lip. Today, when our lip wobbles, we seek solace in coffee.

It would seem that coffee mania is not about coffee at all. It's perhaps not surprising, then, that 85 per cent of coffee consumed in the UK is instant according to Taylors' John Thompson, who points out that annually we drink just one to two kilos per capita versus an enthusiastic nine to 10 in Finland.

Italians love bitter tastes in food. Espresso, the quintessential Italian drink, is often perceived to be the most sophisticated coffee there is. We may have fallen for the coffee-drinking image, but the roar of the milk steamer is testament to the British preference for the image over reality. Coffee Republic sells more lattes than any other drink in the City and, together with cappuccinos, a latte is by far the most popular coffee in its 84 bars.


However, I defy critics of our milky palate. Think what strides we have made in food and wine in the last decade. We are the most experimental wine consumers in the world. Coffee may soon follow suit. John Thompson agrees: "We may start off with a latte, rather than an espresso, but, through experimenting with different flavours, we begin to educate our palates." Whittard's coffee buyer Giles Hilton adds: "Coffee is going through what bread and olive oil did in the 90s. People are aware of different coffees now and are asking for more exotic blends. The coffee shops are doing Whittard a lot of good." Both buyers have noticed a move away from mid-weight, light-roast coffees up a notch to a higher roast. People in the UK are now enjoying the style and flavour of Central and South American coffee, especially those from Colombia and Guatemala.

We Britons are approaching coffee cautiously and shouldn't feel obliged to drink what's considered cool by aficionados. I'm the first to have a shot of espresso on the hoof in Italy and a concentrated, sweet brew in Istanbul but, on home turf, I like gossiping over a tall, semi-skimmed cappuccino with a chum. What's more, the experts agree that to experience the true nuances of fine coffee it should be made in a cafetière, not high roasted and blasted through an espresso machine. So feel free to experiment with single-estate coffee at home and indulge a nursery palate in public. Why not?


With six shops opening and 16 million cups consumed every month, the trend for coffee seems set to continue. The chains have provoked a sea-change in our perception of coffee and—like them or loathe them—today's coffee bars serve an infinitely superior drink to those of the 50s. We have begun to realise that coffee is a specialist thing but—just for now—that British stiff upper lip has become a froth-covered one.

**SARAH MARSH** writes on food and drink for leading newspapers and magazines worldwide.





The great wines of 50 years ago are, if properly cellared, coming into their own. Michael Broadbent draws the corks on the best bottles.



Ch. Latour  
1952 Ch. Cheval-Blanc  
1952 Ch. Mouton-Rothschild  
1952 Ch. Haut-Brion  
1955 Ch. Mouton-Rothschild  
1959 Ch. Cos d'Estournel  
1975 Ch. La Mission Haut-Brion  
1982 Ch. Latour

The atmospheric, centuries-old premises of Berry Brothers & Rudd, above, house celebrated vintages, including outstanding fine wines from the 50s.

IF YOU were born in the 1950s, someone had the foresight to give you a couple of cases of wine to mark your advent and you've had the restraint not to drink it, what would it be like now? Although you might consider yourself to be in the prime of your life, you're definitely not as young as you used to be—and nor is the wine. At between 40 and 50 years of age, most wines, even the great classics, are on a downward slope, if not "over the hill". A thoroughbred vintage wine will take time to reach full maturity, will remain on that plateau for a certain period and then, unless there is an unforeseen problem—an overheated cellar, a bad cork or a breakage, for instance—will gradually lose its fruit and stamina, become oxidised and finally fade away. In the meantime, wine is being consumed, and the few remaining great wines of top vintages will therefore be scarce and expensive. Top vintages are the only ones that will survive this long.

# Vintage Cellars



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18 Sussex Street, SW1. Tel: 020 7821 2000.  
www.farr-vintners.com

**Berry Brothers & Rudd has been trading for over 300 years, so the 50s must feel like yesterday. Alex Murray suggests a bottle of 1955 Graham's vintage port, £230.**  
3 St James's Street, SW1. Tel: 020 7396 9600.  
www.bbr.com

**Bordeaux Index sells a range of 50s vintages by phone or over the internet, including 1953 Château Pétrus, £685 a bottle.**  
Tel: 020 7253 2110; www.bordeauxindex.com

**Corney and Barrow's (Broker Services) changing range of vintage wines has recently included 1952 Château Pétrus (£365) and Lynch-Bages (£105) per bottle.**  
Tel: 020 7539 3200.

**Auctions are an excellent source of vintage wines, with the lure of attractive prices. Christie's holds fine wine auctions on December 6 and 10. Tel: 020 7839 9060. Sotheby's sales are on November 14 and December 5. Tel: 020 7293 6423.**

**If you're planning to dine out, the Connaught has a remarkable cellar. To mark chef Michel Bourdin's retirement, a special valedictory menu is being served in December. Why not follow Oysters Christian Dior with 1950 Cockburn port?**  
Carlos Place, Mayfair W1. Tel: 020 7499 7070.

**La Gavroche serves both the 1955 and 1959 Château La Tour, Poulillac. "The 1959 is one of the very best vintages," says Monsieur Tomasin, head sommelier. "It's meaty, with a wonderful truffle flavour."**  
43 Upper Brook Street, W1. Tel: 020 7408 0881.

**Alan Holmes, new sommelier of Petrus, singles out the 1955 Château d'Yquem, Sauternes. "It is now starting to loosen up," he says, "with fresh, tropical flavours and a hint of caramel and biscuit."**  
33 St James's Street, SW1. Tel: 020 7930 4272.

**For a less formal dining experience, Bibendum serves a 1952 Château Pichon-Lalande, Deuxième Cru, for £295.**  
Michelin House, 81 Fulham Road, SW3.  
Tel: 020 7581 5817.

for most wines are made to be consumed within a surprisingly short time.

Top-class claret has been the principal object of desire to the English connoisseur for well over two centuries, during which period wine from châteaux classed as first-growths has been bought by the well-off, cellared, "left for best" and then not infrequently forgotten by the next few generations. The greatest wines in the late 60s and 70s—my early days as head of the wine department at Christie's—were so-called pre-phyloxera vintages of Lafite and its peers, which had been "laid down" by an elderly client's grandfather or great-grandfather and forgotten about. The classics, such as Château Lafite between 1858 and 1878, were, if stored unmoved in a cold, country-house cellar, remarkably drinkable even at a century old.

With any luck, your father will have bought and "laid down" claret in the 50s, when there were several good vintages, including 1952, the exquisite 1953 and 1955.

They were certainly cheap enough. In merchants' lists of the mid- to late-50s, London- and Bristol-bottled clarets of the 1952 vintage ranged from 9/- to 14/-, jumping to 16/- for Cheval-Blanc and 26/- for Château-bottled Latour. Though some of the 1952s can still be delicious, most have been less able to withstand the rigours of time. This leaves us with the outstanding 1959. Happily, nearly all the first-growths—Lafite, Latour, Château Margaux, Mouton-Rothschild and Cheval-Blanc—are still superb if they've been well cellared.

For those who prefer Burgundy, the 50s were pretty good too. 1952 was firm and well-constituted, and 1953 was also good, as was 1955. 1957 was better than in Bordeaux, and I consider 1959 to be the last of Burgundy's big guns—but there's a snag. Apart from the relatively few great domains, such as Romanée-Conti, very highly priced and of limited availability, a substantial amount of the Burgundy shipped to England for bottling was pretty bogus. Indeed, of the best-known village names—Beaune, Pommard, Volnay, Nuits St Georges, Vosne-Romanée and Gevrey-Chambertin—surprisingly few would have been shipped over to England in barrels containing

100 per cent wine of those designations, and, once in the merchants' cellars, there was no guarantee that what was finally bottled and labelled was the genuine article.

If this sounds appalling, let me add that British wine merchants and their customers were perfectly happy with this, and prices were very reasonable—from 10/- for a Côte de Beaune Villages to 23/- a bottle for so-called Chambertin. As it happens, Burgundy that was "stretched" with the addition of sturdy reds from the Rhône and Midi (or, even cheaper, with Algerian wine), kept well. So, paradoxically, quite a lot of the vintage Burgundy already mentioned has survived.

And so to port, "the Englishman's wine". Vintage port not only keeps well, it is the slowest maturing of all the classic wines. Being fortified right from the earliest stages of production enables it to evolve slowly and retain its sturdiness and fruit over a long period. True vintage port was bottled after two years and left undisturbed in cool, dark cellars for at least 20 years.

Unhappily, in the 50s, the port market was in deep depression. Sales hit a low, partly because British merchants and their customers still had large stocks of pre-war vintages, which had been bought in quantity just before the slump of the 30s.

Though good wines were made in the Douro, Oporto-based shippers weren't able to do much with them and declared three vintages only—1950, 1955 and 1958. The 1955s were magnificent. In fact, I'd go as far as to say they are the most perfect for drinking now and, though rarer than the more fashionable 63s, are relatively underpriced.

The trade price for the 1955s seems ludicrously low now, with the five leading shippers selling to British importers at £150 for a standard shipping cask averaging 100 gallons. The retail price on a Harvey's of Bristol list "for laying down" was 13/8d in bond for the major brands. Yet, at the same time, the 1959 Harvey's list includes some excellent 1945s, with Graham—in my opinion the finest of all—a mere 17/9d a bottle.

In theory, therefore, reasonably well-heeled wine lovers must have been having the time of their lives in the 50s, for prices were not only stable—they had hardly moved since the late 20s—but excellent value. The finest European

## GREAT WINES AND TOP VINTAGES ARE THE ONLY ONES THAT WILL HAVE SURVIVED FROM THE 50S.





classic wines would never again be so readily and reasonably available to the British consumer.

What about white wine? Unlike the light and dry whites, which really must be, and usually are, consumed shortly after they appear on the shelves, the finest sweet wines, Sauternes in particular, not only keep but, like their red counterparts in the Médoc, positively benefit from ageing in the bottle. Very good vintages in the 50s included 1950 itself, 1952, 1953, 1955 and—once again—1959, which topped the lot. I can safely say that any major Sauternes (or Barsac) château of that vintage will still be lovely now. Names? Château d'Yquem, the finest and most expensive, but look out for Rieussec, Climens and Suduiraut on remnant lists or at auction.

The reader might ask, what about Italian, Spanish and German wine? Or New World? The latter—in the 50s—can easily be dismissed. It was unknown. The image of Italian wines was of a straw-covered and well-named "fiasco" hanging from the ceiling in an Italian restaurant in Soho, while Spanish wine, then always on the bottom of a good merchant's list, was, almost without exception, poor. German wines, on the other hand, were surprisingly highly regarded, if only among a discerning few. Liebfraumilch and cheap "sugar and water" wines that have since destroyed the reputation of German wines were only just starting to insinuate themselves. On an encouraging note, many of the excellent sweet wines produced by the great estates in the Rhine and Mosel districts can still be fabulous, particularly the 1953 and 1959.

So, if you were born in the 50s, you can still enjoy the finest wines of that period, though they take some finding. However, if your father bought the decade's best wines and some remain in the cellar, consider yourself doubly fortunate.

**Opposite, port—the slowest maturing of all the classic wines—retains its sturdiness and fruit over long periods of time. Award-winning dining at the Connaught Restaurant, below, is complemented by the hotel's formidable wine cellar, which has been built up over 50 years.**



**MICHAEL BROADBENT** is a Director of Christie's and author of numerous books, including the pocket guides *Wine Tasting* and *Wine Vintages*, published by Mitchell Beazley.

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Left, pictured on a Vespa in the film *Roman Holiday*, style icons Gregory Peck and Audrey Hepburn helped raise the profile of the scooter in the 50s. Below, left to right: Hollywood stars, including Doris Day, chose scooters as their favoured mode of transport; in 1946, Signore Piaggio, second from left, presented Pope Pius XII with a Vespa, a sure sign of its popularity at the time; in 1956, British scooter fan Rollo Wicksteed hopped on his Lambretta and headed off on a pilgrimage to the factory in which they were made in Italy. His devotion paid off—during his visit he took part in a photo shoot and later that year appeared (top left in picture) in the Lambretta catalogue.

NOT LONG ago they were the preserve of ex-Mods, ageing Who fans, trainee taxi-drivers and Mediterranean holidays. For most people, they belonged with the bubble car and the Sinclair C5, gathering dust in the museum of transport. But, during the 50s, the motor scooter returned. Soon they were everywhere: all the Brit-pop wannabes, new lads and dot.com commuters were buzzing around on a Vespa. Compared to street-clogging, gas guzzling cars, they began to seem like the ideal urban transport of today. Now they are part of the furniture of London streets, the uniform of urban cool.

The story of the scooter begins with Italy's defeat in World War II. Thanks to the damage inflicted on Italian roads, two wheels were better than four. Also, the difficulties faced by the Italian economy meant that two of her major companies suddenly needed to diversify. Before scooters, Piaggio was a manufacturer of aeroplanes and Innocenti made plumbing supplies. The first Vespa appeared in 1946; the first Lambretta the following year. A classic brand rivalry had begun, a new duel of cool. But the primary appeal was practical: both brands offered a vehicle that was affordable, reliable and cheap to run at a time when petrol was scarce. Their popularity in the coming decade symbolised Europe's economic recovery and a new, youthful confidence that led to the upheavals of the 60s.

And so was born the greatest fashion craze to come out of Italy since the strapless top, and her greatest transport innovation since straight roads. Among the first wave of fans was the Italian author Umberto Eco. "The Vespa came to be linked, in my eyes, with the subtle seduction of faraway places, where it was the only means of transport."

During the 50s, the rest of the world caught on. In 1953 a Vespa featured alongside Gregory Peck and Audrey Hepburn in *Roman Holiday*, a film that placed both Italy and scooters at the pinnacle of cinematic style. (It took Michael Caine and *The Italian Job* to redress the balance.) Also at this time, Hollywood stars began to use scooters on film sets. When John Wayne wasn't on a horse he was on a Vespa, and between takes in *Ben Hur* a scooter was Charlton Heston's chariot of choice.

The first British dealership was R Agius Bikes on the Edgware Road. Claude Agius, the present owner, recalls

# Style on Wheels

In the late 50s it was the symbol of post-war freedom and the herald of youth culture. Then, in the 90s, it returned as the essence of retro chic. In a period of fluctuating fashion and ever-changing technology, the revival of the classic scooter is a minor miracle, says Theo Hobson.





it taking a while for the cult status to emerge: "Scooters first appealed to the ordinary commuter. They were mocked by 'real' bikers, who nicknamed them 'Singer sewing machines'." But soon their street-cred grew and, before long, every fashion-conscious youth owned one.

One of these was Rollo Wicksteed, who remembers buying his first Lambretta in 1956—as soon as he'd finished his National Service—and heading for Italy with some friends. "It was a bit of a pilgrimage really. Once we got to Italy we headed straight for the Lambretta factory, where they gave us a guided tour. They even used us in a photo shoot for the new catalogue." Scooter cool continued well into the 60s with the help of the Mod movement, British youth culture's first incarnation. In the 70s and 80s, however, scooters suffered a period of relative obscurity, despite the best efforts of *Quadrophenia* and neo-Mod bands such as The Jam.

Come the 90s, the scooter returned with a vengeance, and its popularity is still on the rise. New models were launched by Velocifero, Peugeot, Honda and, above all, Piaggio, which introduced the new ET model in 1996, 50 years after the first Vespa. Thanks to an association with Brit pop and "Cool Britannia", scooters were now an essential bit of laddish kit (with ladettes quick to follow). In the tussle between Blur and Oasis for the soul of British youth, the scooter—favoured by both bands—was the clearest winner. Before long, no aspiring pop star or minor celebrity could afford to be seen on any other form of transport. Thanks to such high-profile scooterers—Claude recalls selling a bike to Damon Albarn one day and Sinéad O'Connor the next—Agis Motors was doing its best business since the 60s.

Is the scooter craze a passing fashion—a triumph of style over substance? Definitely not, says Claude: "The revival's partly about the retro fashion thing," he explains, "but also about advances in technology, plus Vespa's high reputation for reliability." He also points to the environmentally friendly reputation of the scooter, and to its traffic-beating potential. Whatever its causes, the appeal is undeniable. Piaggio's sales are increasing every year, presently at a healthy rate of 31 per cent. The company has recently entered the American market and also gained a foothold in China, where it is ready to upgrade a billion bicycles. With 16 million sold so far, the Vespa is already the world's best-selling two-wheeler.

Part of the scooter's recent success must be down to Londoners tiring of the established transport options. In comparison, the attractions of scootering are obvious. Model Jemma Kidd is among the celebrities who agree: "It seems as though the rush hour lasts 24 hours now," she says. "Two wheels are definitely the best approach." Actor Nigel Havers concurs: "A scooter is increasingly becoming my lifeline in terms of getting around London as the traffic reaches gridlock. My Piaggio scooter makes me feel like Gregory Peck every time I ride it."

Another scooter devotee is comedian Harry Enfield. His wife bought him a Vespa for Christmas, he recalls, and soon they bought another, for her to ferry the kids around on. "It's so nice not having a car any more," he says. "You discover that you just don't need some things." The symbol of freedom lives on.

SCOOTERS  
WAS THE  
MODS  
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THEY WERE  
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The scooter has undergone a huge resurgence in popularity, from the 90s right up to the present day. Thanks to its "Cool Britannia" image, the scooter is the only form of transport to be seen on. Celebrity devotees often spotted making a fashion statement around London on their scooters include; top to bottom, comedian Harry Enfield; original Brit pop hero Noel Gallagher; Jamie Oliver, aka *The Naked Chef*; pop heart-throb Robbie Williams; and TV presenter Gail Porter.



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\* Subject to status

\*\*OTR= Standard Yamaha on the road charges

\*\*\*Max Biaggi is a Grand Prix racer who helped Yamaha to become the current holders of the 500cc Grand Prix manufacturer's title, while the Virgin Mobile Aiwa team spearheaded by James Haydon has become the highest-profile squad in British Superbike Racing.

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The same view of London, in 1842, 1952 and—almost—2002. The engraving, of course, is the long-running logo of the ILN. The main picture is from the ILN of 1952, which had the idea of comparing the logo with the contemporary scene. An idea worth repeating, we thought.



## Taking the Long View



1842



1952

THIS 1952 view of the City of London shows a skyline still dominated by St Paul's and its satellite spires (although the Blitz had removed a few of those in the 1842 logo). The main addition is the Faraday Building, to the front and left of St Paul's, which was built in 1933. It is the first hint that the cathedral is in far competition on the City skyline.

The last 50 years have transformed the view, but not wholly beyond recognition. The riverfront warehouses have been modernised or replaced by new buildings, such as the red-brick City of London

school. And who had the bright idea of putting a multi-storey car park in one of London's prime locations? A more stylish addition is the "Blade of Light" footbridge, which links St Paul's with Tate Modern. It is scheduled to reopen, wobble-free, at the beginning of 2002.

The skyline, over the years, is surprisingly unaffected. Despite the Barbican towers and the City office blocks, the great dome of St Paul's still stands supreme. It survived the Blitz, and so far it has survived the architects and planners as well.



2002



The past 50 years have seen an explosion in broadcasting, but what does the future hold? Are we on the cusp of yet another television revolution? Peter Fiddick investigates.

# Box clever

IT WAS TELEVISION'S second Coronation. On May 12, 1937, barely six months after the BBC launched its new service to a largely unheeding nation, it announced—all through them—mag relayed the progress of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth as they proceeded to and from Westminster Abbey. The cheering crowds lining the streets outnumbered a television audience of no more than 50,000, strong...and only the invited guests saw the Abbey generations.

But June 2, 1937, was to be very different, a landmark not only in the history of Britain, but also for what was to prove the 20th Century's transforming medium of entertainment and enlightenment. And twined the new young Queen herself who, in overruling her more skuld counters', advice about allowing cameras into the Abbey, effectively ushered in the television era.

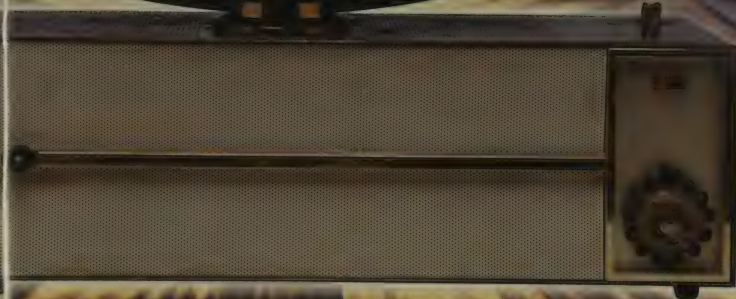
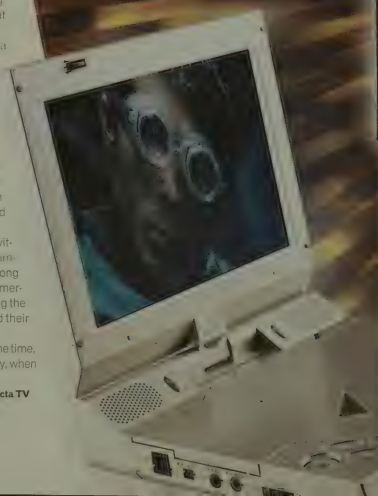
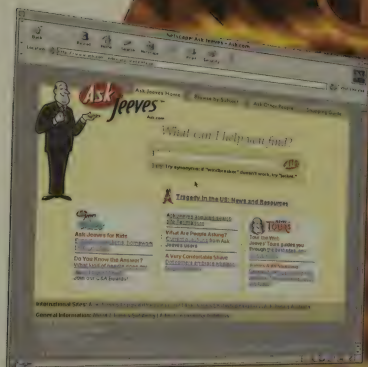
Closed down during the war and revived in 1946, television had made a stuttering restart. Even with such events as the wedding of Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip in 1947, and the London Olympic Games of 1948 (the BBC broadcast all of 17.5 hours in a week) to boost interest, only 157,000 television licences were issued by March 1949. But neither the population still couldn't get the signal.

The prospect of the Coronation, lifting the spirits of a country still feeling the post-war pinch, changed that. The government hastily ordered a transmitter-building programme, and television set manufacturers found their marketing transformed. By the spring of 1937 more than 12 million sets were installed—and on Coronation Day most of those homes were filled with friends and neighbours too. An estimated 20 million people were introduced that day to the wonder of TV.

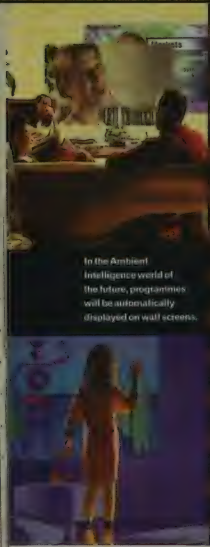
Furthermore, the young Elizabeth's decision to invite the cameras unwittingly gave a hand to the next crucial leap forward. Alongside the BBC's career in World War II as a pioneer of the cinema newsreel teams, among their number men seeking to break the BBC's monopoly and launch commercial television, a project facing stiff conservative political opposition. Seizing the chance to show that they too could cover a royal event in style, they moved their case forward. ITV went on air on September 22, 1955.

But it takes an effort of the imagination, even for one who was around at the time, to recall just how little television there was in the medium's early days. Today, when

Television has come a long way—from family entertainment on the Philco Predicta TV of the 1950s to interactive communications via satellite, cable and mobile device.







## An intelligent future

Ambient Intelligence describes a digital environment that is sensitive, adaptive and responsive to the presence of people, using systems that are invisible or in the background of the user's surroundings. The networked home of the future will consist of clusters of embedded devices with a user interface that is an extension of our natural speech and movements, through touch panels, heat and weight sensors, and cameras that track our global movements. Using this system, you won't need a mouse or a confusing array of buttons. You will be the pointing device of the future.

The first ever multimedia experience—shown at the World Exhibition in 1958—was devised by Philips, which today is a leader in technology for interactive television. This research company sees the set-top box evolving into a "home beacon" that will link our individual residences to the outside world. Within the home, it will interface with everything from hand-held devices to large, flat-panel displays built into the walls of a room.

With this system, the user is instantly recognised when they arrive at their home: it switches off security devices, unlocks the door and opens it. A memo-frame in the kitchen highlights new messages, one of which may indicate that the shopping list composed by the intelligent larder needs confirmation before being forwarded to the supermarket. It also displays a range of menus that can be cooked with food currently in the fridge. The news-on-demand TV channel switches on and transfers automatically to other screens elsewhere in the house as the user moves around. The television also automatically scans through all the channels and records programmes that it decides will match its user's tastes.

any home can choose to receive a couple of hundred channels, 24 hours a day, the notion of just two television services opening at teatime and packing up in time for bedtime cocoa seems absurd.

The big question now—and one affecting nations around the globe and businesses with billions of dollars riding on their ability to predict the future—is where do we go from here?

The 21st century offers any number of scenarios for where we are headed. Interactivity is a reality—and not just for sport and *Big Brother*. More and more of us are hooked up to, maybe even hooked on, the internet. Even the simple mobile phone has become a medium for texting schoolkids, who have rapidly invented a language of their own to take advantage of what, for them, is a quicker, more accessible, way of communicating with each other than email.

Indeed, the school-age generation's easy familiarity with every new technology will drive increasingly rapid change. We need look no further than the video game for proof of their power. In a few years it has gone from the equivalent of cartoons for kids to an industry in which ever more computer power is deployed by the most creative graphic artists in the world to fuel a massive new market in which giants such as Sony, Sega and Microsoft race to get ahead of each other. "Gaming," in this sense, will increasingly challenge conventional television for its share of our leisure time.

Gaming in another sense might help television hold its own. Gambling seems to be an innate human instinct, and interactive technology will make it easy to win or lose money on almost any activity, from the result of the next constituency to declare on election night, to

whether the run Michael Owen is making at this very moment will result in a goal or not.

One future-watcher's simulation of another route to our technological destiny envisages a woman coming home to her model apartment, where the best part of one wall is filled by a flat screen. "Hello, Archie," she calls. Whereupon the screen wakes up and responds, instantly offering her preferred news channel, which she watches briefly before asking it for her messages. No hands, no keypad, just voice recognition. Her husband, meanwhile, is heading home (via a particularly scenic coastline) and stops to call her on his wireless laptop. They have a conversation in full, two-way vision (he admiring the backdrop) and plan dinner. As he logs off, she calls up the menu of their chosen restaurant and books, then turns to her personal workout programme.

Have your own vision. The technology is mostly available already. Flat screens. Surround sound. Speech recognition (with instantaneous translation). Interactivity, via satellite, cable or mobile device. Movies and video on instant demand, plus the Two records, which can store many hours of video, learn your personal tastes, then scan a hundred channels in search of your sort of programme.

But, further down the road, perhaps there won't actually be channels as we now know them at all. For what will continue to change, perhaps faster than we might expect, is how we pay for all these services. We are already used to the idea of paying a monthly subscription for a bundle of channels, plus a top-up sum for a "premium" channel or two. And now certain sports events or rock concerts are being charged for separately, again by pay per view (PPV). But the bit of technology many



satellite and cable providers are waiting for is the one that makes PPV reliable and widespread.

That vision of the future could have us choosing and paying for our programmes in the same way that we'll be ordering our groceries online from the supermarket. The programme-makers could even sell to us direct, cutting out the broadcaster. Already some people are forecasting the end of the television licence fees—therefore of the BBC as we know it—in the next decade.

But which way will we, the people, jump? The middle of a media recession, such as 2001-02 is visiting upon us, is not exactly the best time to conjure up a hi-tech future, what with the dot.com disasters, the slump in television advertising revenue and Sky needing £400 plus per subscriber per annum to recoup its investment. Perhaps, when the economic good times roll again, we will put our money where their fantasy future is.

Meanwhile, there being nothing on TV tonight, I'm going to buy a book. I could, of course, call it up from Amazon.com, or use digital television. But prudence suggests it might be in my interest to stroll around and help my local bookshop stay in business a while longer.

**PETER FIDDIS**, a freelance writer and journalist, was the first Media Editor of *The Guardian*, editor of *The Listener*, and editor of *Television*, the journal of the Royal Television Society, of which he is a fellow.

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## January

Left, do's and don'ts of the zebra crossing: a pictorial explanation of the new pedestrian crossing regulations. The regulations "have aroused a great deal of controversy among vehicle-drivers and pedestrians alike".



## February

Left, His Royal Highness King George VI with his wife Queen Elizabeth, shortly before his death at Sandringham.

Right, on February 11, the King's coffin arrives at King's Cross Station, bound for Westminster Abbey. The station was specially decorated for the arrival, and a crimson carpet laid on the platform. The coffin was carried by the bearer party of the Grenadier Guards, who are all over 6ft 3in tall.



# 1952

A year in pictures

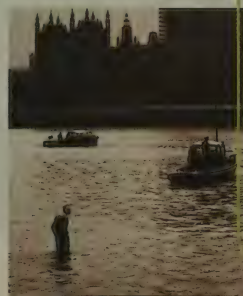
To mark 50 years from the Queen's succession we have delved into our archives at *The Illustrated London News*. As in the press today, big stories from home and abroad sit alongside the quirky, the novel and the downright absurd.



## March

Above, "Clarence", a new dummy parachutist made of rubber, is used to test parachutes at high altitudes over Britain.

Right, Harold Macmillan, Minister of Housing and Local Government, at the Ideal Home exhibition, in a model he called "The People's House". The government had just launched a huge public building programme, to address the post-war housing shortage. By 1953, 300,000 houses had been built.



## April

Left, Lord Noel-Buxton wades into the Thames to test the existence of a Roman ford, which he believes crosses the river at Westminster. He had to swim part of the way, but claims to have proved his point.

Right, the Duke of Edinburgh visits the Road Research Laboratory in Harmondsworth. He watches a woman having the movements of her eyes recorded on a cathode-ray oscillograph, to test her response to traffic signals. The Duke was told that the possibility of using radar devices to improve car safety in fog had been investigated, but that no device for small vehicles appeared to be a practical proposition.







May

Left, a Canadian civil defence expert lecturing on the effects of an atomic bomb explosion in a crowded city. To indicate scale, a model bomb burst is placed on a map of Ottawa.

Above, Compo the chimp helps Whipnade zoo celebrate its 21st birthday.



July

Above, Sir Winston Churchill, who returned to Downing Street the previous year, meets a warrior from another age.



Above, Dr Hewlitt Johnson, the "Red Dean" of Canterbury holding a document alleged to support his claims of American "germ warfare" in China. A debate about his conduct was held in the House of Lords on July 15.



June

Left, the Queen's Birthday Parade of the Brigade of Guards, with the Ceremony of Trooping the Colour, the first public occasion of Queen Elizabeth II's reign since the ending of court mourning.

Right, "Holding a hat and wearing a jar containing a representation of her soul", a Land Dyak woman of Sarawak, Indonesia. This peaceful people had been disturbed by attacks from Communist terrorists calling themselves the Sarawak-Indonesian People's Liberation Army.

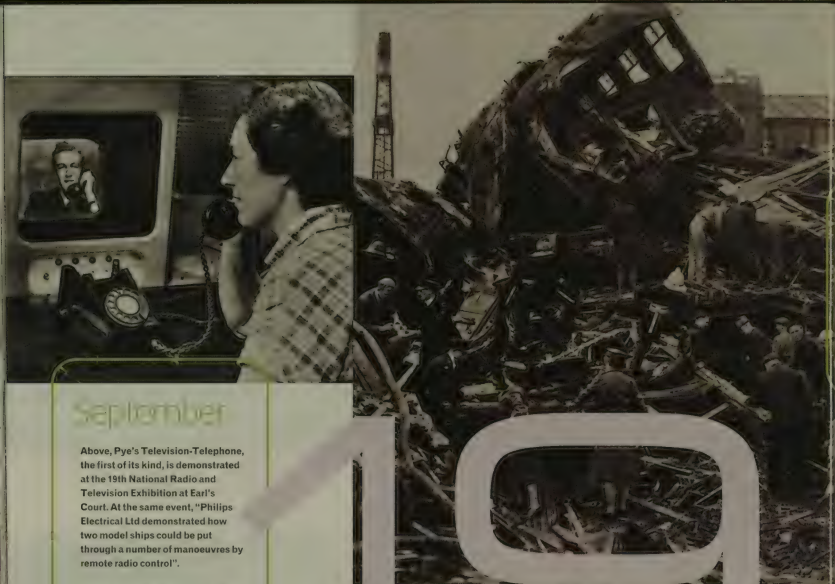


August

Left, the Dry Land Rowing Championship of the British Empire at the Lord's Taverners' Ball, in aid of the National Playing Fields Association. The Lord's Taverners' Damp Bobs defeated the combined Oxford and Cambridge University Crew.

Above, "the new spearhead of England's attack: F Trueman, the young Yorkshire fast bowler, when he made a fast bowler's test record of 8 wickets for 31 against India."





## September

Above, Pye's Television-Telephone, the first of its kind, is demonstrated at the 19th National Radio and Television Exhibition at Earl's Court. At the same event, "Philips Electrical Ltd demonstrated how two model ships could be put through a number of manoeuvres by remote radio control".

Below, an advertisement for English Electric, alerting customers to the latest kitchen appliances.

As well as helping farmers to supply more food to the shops, "English Electric" helps housewives to cook and prepare it. "English Electric" refrigerators, cookers and mixers are making life easier in countless homes throughout the country. Whenever electricity can play its part, on the land, in industry or in the home, it is generated and adapted by "English Electric" for the benefit of mankind.

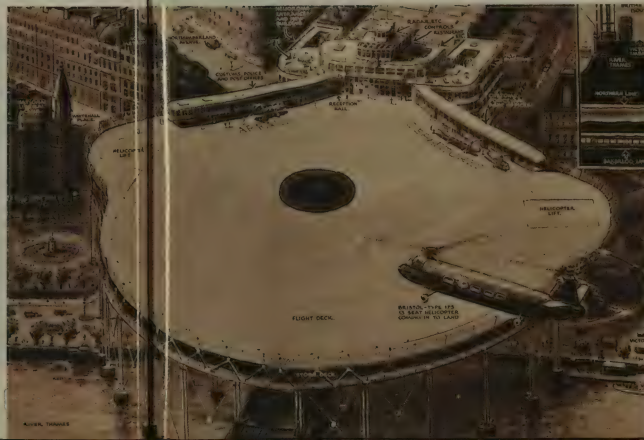


better living

The ENGLISH ELECTRIC Company Limited, Queen House, Kingsway, London, W.C.1

## November

Right, this is not a futuristic fantasy but a serious proposal for a giant heliport to be built on top of Charing Cross Station. Well, it would certainly get you in to work quicker than the District Line. In fact, someone should show this to Mr Livingstone.



## October

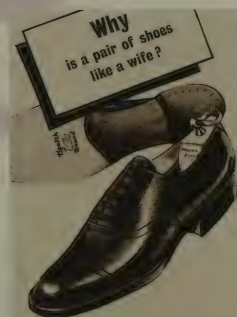
Left, the worst disaster in English railway history: 109 people are killed when three trains collide at Harrow and Wealdstone station.

Right, the Nixon affair dominates the US presidential election campaign. In a TV broadcast, the vice-presidential candidate defends his acceptance of some £6,000 from supporters. "What appears to have been one of the most telling points of his speech was the reference to a cocker spaniel sent to his family after the Chicago conference. That was a gift, he declared, that he would not give up. His running mate Mr Eisenhower expressed his complete confidence in the senator."



## December

Shoe shoppers are reminded that, as with wives, surface appearances are not everything. "There must be sterling qualities and thorough goodness beneath."



AS WITH WIVES, it's not the initial outlay for a pair of shoes that matters—it's the upkeep! Attractive appearance is something. But how long will it last?—be you have to live with the things! There must be sterling qualities and thorough goodness beneath.

In this synthetic age it's a sheer joy to come across something so thoroughly good as a pair of Rocket & June.

"Health" Brand shoes. Built by Kensington craftsmen, from very good quality tanned leather, they're still priced from 79s upwards.

When, at long last, they come to need repair, they'll have earned every penny of what it costs and those glib uppers will deserve the finest mending you can buy.

COMPILED BY THEO HOBSON





Small is beautiful—Lucy Bracey's West Village is one of the quirky, cult-like boutiques that are back in vogue

## The Boutique Boom

Where do today's best-dressed Londoners discover exclusive, one-off fashions? Avril Groom explores the capital's best boutiques and asks why these idiosyncratic emporia have swung back into style.

"**BOUTIQUE**" is a word that goes in and out of favour. Right now it's in, as entrepreneurs open small shops in all corners of the capital selling their personal vision of fashion. Having soared through the 70s, by the 80s boutiques were considered kitsch, and no self-respecting owner called their premises anything other than a shop—a reaction to the original boutique boom. Now, following fashion's relentless cycle, they're back in style.

For most people, boutiques are inextricably linked with the "swinging London" of the 60s but, surprisingly, the idea goes back a little further. The mid-50s saw the beginnings of a movement that changed shopping and fashion forever. Until then, most women had their clothes made by a dressmaker, or went to what were called "madam shops", because the assistants trilled "can I help you, madam?" The second a client crossed the threshold. But in that brave, new world of technology and prosperity, young, working women began to demand a less formal, more modern approach.

Mary Quant was first to recognise this need and in 1957 opened Bazaar on the King's Road, which was to become the trailblazing "boutique". Real fame came when her idea snowballed in the early 60s and a new trend was born. The concept that Quant pioneered—a small, quirky shop selling cutting-edge designs personally chosen by the owner—is, once again, behind some of London's most exciting fashion experiences.

At first Quant sold other designers' work but moved on to her own collections. "During that period there was virtually no ready-to-wear," says PR doyen Percy Savage. "London shops copied Paris couture designs by buying the toile, or pattern. I remember Quant squeezing in to

observe at Courrèges—he invented the miniskirt but she popularised it for the mass youth market."

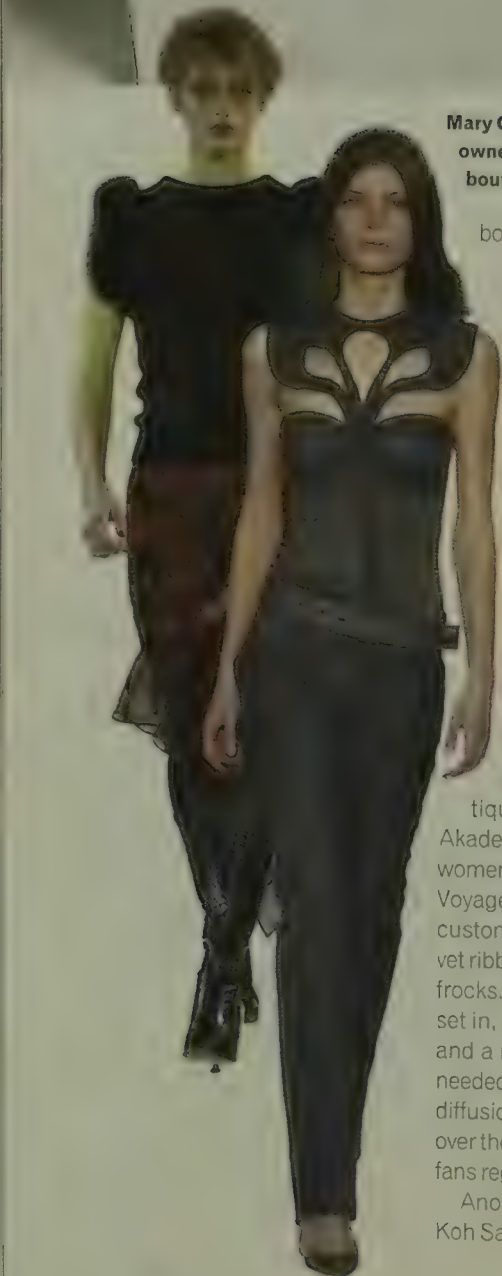
By the end of the decade, the mini-driven youthquake was under way. Quant had two shops and models such as Jean Shrimpton on her catwalk. Carnaby Street was starting to swing, and *Vogue* heralded "the teenage thing". As young people gained spending power and influence in the early 60s, boutiques flourished, typified by Barbara Hulanicki's Biba and Lee Bender's Bus Stop. All were individualistic, nostalgic emporia where Twiggy lookalikes queued for feather boas and canvas boots. When hippy culture arrived in the late 60s it spawned famed but ephemeral boutiques such as Granny Takes a Trip and Phoiol, heavy with the scent of joss sticks and often run by young aristocrats who could afford to "drop out", take the hippy trail and find the exotic merchandise.

The start of the 70s saw the birth of a boutique remarkable for its longevity. Unlike its siblings, Browns continues to flourish and remains the yardstick by which all others are measured. Joan Burstein was born into a rag-trade family, married a market trader with a sharp business mind and made and lost a fortune running an early mass-market fashion chain. In 1970, her husband bought the first Browns shop and their South Molton Street empire began, expanding into seven separate stores. Burstein has a fantastic eye for trends and quality. She was the first to bring household names such as Armani, Calvin Klein, Ralph Lauren, Romeo Gigli and Donna Karan to Britain, and she is well-known for kicking starting John Galiano's career by buying designs from his college graduation collection and selling every piece. This autumn hers becomes the first London





Mary Quant, above, pioneered the boutique trend when she opened *Bazaar* on the King's Road in 1957. By the late 60s Quant owned two boutiques, and models, such as Jean Shrimpton, above right, paraded her designs down the catwalk. Today's hip boutiques stock pieces by international designers such as Boyd (*The Cross*), left, and Balenciaga (*Something*), below left.



boutique to stock his successful collection for Dior.

Power suits and the rise of the identikit global designer store typified the 80s, but Josephine and Peter Turner's *A la Mode* successfully bucked the trend. With passion and perfect taste, they have established a reputation for buying the best from the brightest, new international names. Their individual buying style is distinctively different from that of the larger stores, as their feminine autumn collections of Marc Jacobs and Chloé illustrate. Now that boutiques are back in fashion they have seized the moment to open a new Chelsea branch, which has two floors of international designs, one of them dedicated to more quirky styles.

The individualism of the 90s that replaced brand blandness fuelled the boutique's revival. Boho chic and an interest in vintage craft and detail took over from minimalism, and "girly" boutiques—first *Tokio* and later *The Cross*, *Mimi* and *Akademi*—sprang up, often run by fashionable, young women for their socialite friends. The giant of them all is *Voyage*, where the Mazzilli family had a brainwave—to customise, adding details such as antique-looking velvet ribbon or lace appliqués to simple cardigans and slip frocks. So widely copied were their ideas that paranoia set in, leading to the famously obstructive door policy and a membership system for which only celebrities needed apply. That has now been relaxed and a second, diffusion shop has opened, but the best pieces, however over the top and expensive, are still so original that many fans regard them as an investment.

Another 90s boutique set for long-term success is *Koh Samui*, set up by Paul Sexton and Talita Zoe, who

initially sold work by designers that they had befriended around avant-garde Shoreditch. The pair are noted for their exceedingly sharp antennae, having picked up Markus Lupfer's one-offs while he still had a day-job at Clements Ribeiro.

*Koh Samui* is a target for any young designer wanting serious stockist cred, and is the forerunner for the 21st century's first crop of cool, hip boutiques. Further and wilder is the mantra for the designers they stock and the places they go to find them, so stiff is competition to get the hottest names first. Yet the principle of an individual owner with personal passion still applies, be it Yasmin Cho with her eponymous upstairs shop in Poland Street, *Kokon To Zai* in Soho, part owned by eccentric Macedonian designer Marjan Pejoski, or *Concrete*, opened this year by Philip Stephens to showcase the young talents he nurtures as an agent and PR. Stephens also stocks more establishment names including, with delightful irony, *Courrèges*, which kick-started the entire boutique boom and is now a cult classic.

Other boutiques are in far-flung areas that only the dedicated reach: The West Village, with its interesting, vintage-orientated New York unknowns at the far end of Fulham Road; so-hip-it-hurts *Something*, with serious, cutting-edge names, at the back of Notting Hill; and *Hoxton Boutique* in on-the-crest Shoreditch. All have the qualities of the best boutiques of the past 50 years—originality and a strong personal handwriting. Whether they have the staying power of Browns, only the future will tell.

**AVRIL GROOM** writes regularly on fashion and luxury shopping for the *Financial Times*, *The Scotsman* and various magazines.





**Browns**, left, opened in 1970, is a firm favourite with cool Londoners. Find Markus Lupfer pieces, below right, at Koh Samui, and Ungaro's feminine creations, below left, at A la Mode. Original accessories from The Cross, far below right.

that are going places. Simple shop does not distract from the stunning range, which mixes sharp modernity with decorative femininity, and black with bright colour. Current designers include Balenciaga, Clements Ribeiro, Matthew Williamson, Julien Macdonald and Markus Lupfer.

**Something** Chepstow Road, W2. 020 7229 9944.

Opened 2000. Consultant designer Marc Hare and partner Selene Allen bring a uniquely modernist, slightly hard-edged and sexy aesthetic to update girly Notting Hill. Super-hip, minimal, chrome interior, lots of helpful staff and cutting-edge clothes—Balenciaga, Véronique Branquinho, Martin Margiela, Martine Sitbon, AF Vandevorst, Vivienne Westwood, Sophia Kokosalaki, Boudicca and new hit Warren Noronha, plus some menswear.

**Tokio** Brompton Road, SW3, and Westbourne Grove, W11. 020 7823 7310. Opened 1988.

Owner Manami Sloley was quick to spot the 90s yen for individuality. Concentrates on a feminine, finely detailed aesthetic. Clean, cream shop, in which clothes are arranged by colour. New Notting Hill branch is young and cool, while Brompton Road is more sophisticated.

Designers include Keita Maruyama, Markus Lupfer, Maurizio Pecoraro, Anthony Symonds, Eley Kishimoto and new Brit Alice Temperley.

**Voyage** Fulham Road and Sydney Street, SW3. 020

7352 8611. Opened 1990. Baroque decadence in the couture store, fresher in the diffusion shop for jeans and casualwear (both membership or by appointment). No designer ranges here—everything is designed by the Mazzillis. Amazing couture one-offs made on-site, dripping with decoration and prices to match. Manufactured diffusion ranges are surprisingly good value—up to £300.

**The West Village** Fulham Road, SW10. 020 7795 2611.

Opened 1999. Its quirky décor features a mix of contemporary imagery and retro furniture. Hot New York designers Catherine Malandrino and Cynthia Rowley are sold alongside owner Lucy Benzecry's own Meza range and accessories from London and Paris.

## Best Boutiques

**A la Mode** Hans Crescent, SW1, and Symons Street, SW3. 020 7584 2133. Opened 1985. Calm, elegant, marble and chrome, scented with Kenneth Turner candles. Very personal choice in delicate styles from feminine top brands—Chloé, Marc Jacobs, Ungaro, Marni and Maurizio Pecoraro. One floor of the new Symons Street boutique is dedicated to quirkier, more "London" style.

**Browns** South Molton Street, W1. 020 7491 7833. Opened 1970. Five intimate, linked shops, including men's and home, plus edgy Browns Focus opposite. Helpful staff and a huge fashion spectrum—from monochrome Belgians (Margiela, Demeulemeester), through quirky (Marni, Marc by Marc Jacobs) to pure glamour (Dolce & Gabbana, Dior) among others.

**Concrete** Marshall Street, W1. 020 7434 4546. Opened 2001. A glorious mish-mash of samples, experimental ranges and accessories, plus wacky, DIY décor. Mix of seriously edgy and surprisingly wearable. Some menswear. Young Brits include Maria Chen, Emma Cook, Preen and Robert Cary-Williams, plus Courrèges, Marc le Bihan and José Enrique Ona Selfa.

**The Cross** Portland Road, W11. 020 7727 6760. Opened 1996. Started by Central St Martins graduates Sam Robinson and Sarah Kean to sell their own designs, plus the work of college friends such as Toby Mott. The shop concentrates on handcrafted details, great accessories and kooky gifts. Serious names too—Chloé, Missoni, Luisa Beccaria, Saltwater, Boyd, Rozae Nichols, Fake London and Australian handcraft duo Easton Pearson.

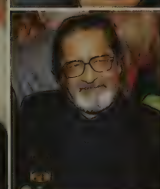
**Koh Samui** Monmouth Street, WC2, and Lowndes Street, SW1. 020 7240 4280. Opened 1995. Pounces on new names



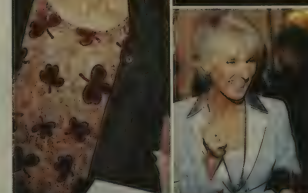
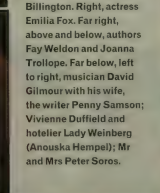




Left, the star-studded PEN gala party, in aid of the writers and readers of the future, was held at the Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park Hotel, London in September. Guests from the world of literature and the media included: below left, novelist Ben Okri; above, the novelist Martin Amis with his wife; right, crime writer PD James; below right, novelist Margaret Drabble; below, left to right, TV impressionist Rory Bremner, celebrity chef Nigella Lawson, Lisa Barnard, Managing Director of The Illustrated London News Group, and journalist Nicholas Foulkes; far below, novelist Edna O'Brien.



Above, left to right, actor Richard E Grant; novelist Frederick Forsyth with his wife; Nobel prizewinner Sir Vidia Naipaul; and broadcaster Alan Whicker with Lady Rachel Billington. Left, Lady Sponder and Mrs Richard Burton. Below left, writer Victoria Glendinning and Lady Rachel Billington. Right, actress Emilia Fox. Far right, above and below, authors Fay Weldon and Joanna Trollope. Far below, left to right, musician David Gilmour with his wife, the writer Penny Samson; Vivienne Duffield and hotelier Lady Weinberg (Anouska Hempel); Mr and Mrs Peter Soros.



## Pen friends

The *Illustrated London News* joins the stars at the annual PEN dinner.

**LITERARY STARS.** publishers and performers gathered for a glamorous dinner held by English PEN, the association of writers, to raise money for its Readers and Writers Programme. Among the evening's patrons were The Illustrated London News Group, alongside other publishing houses including the *Lancet*, *Review* and Bloomsbury, and individual supporters Frederick Forsyth, Joanna Trollope, Margaret Drabble and many others. Speakers included Martin Amis, Rory Bremner and Richard E Grant, but the evening's high point was an auction of the entire Everyman and Faber libraries, presided over by George Craig of Tatler and Belinda Harley, which raised nearly £100,000.

Wines for the event were arranged by The Illustrated London News Group. Donations included Pol Roger White Foil NV courtesy of Pol Roger Ltd; Valdivieso Barrel Selection Chardonnay 2000 courtesy of Bibendum Wine Ltd; and Capannelle di James Sherwood & Figli 1994 Rosso Toscana courtesy of Sea Containers Group.





# [top tickets]

from stage to screen,  
galleries to concert halls

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## theatre

Offering exotic alternatives to the traditional panto fun are the **National's** revival of *South Pacific*, **Cirque du Soleil's** surreal circus antics in *Quidam*, and **Harold Pinter** directing his meditative *No Man's Land*. **Star power** drives *The Royal Family* with **Judi Dench** & **Lindsay Duncan**, while *Kiss Me Kate* supplies tuneful, carol-free entertainment.

**BOSTON MARRIAGE** 76: Wainmaker & Anna Chancellor reprise their impressive performances as two clandestine lovers in Edwardian New England whose relationship is blown apart when one of them falls for a respectable young lady. This may be one of David Mamet's least substantial plays, but this grudge match of hard-edged invective, seething jealousy & chintzy drawing room politeness is well-orchestrated by Phyllida Lloyd. At times it's like a Henry James story rewritten by Joe Orton. Opens Dec 3. **New Ambassadors**, West St, WC2 (020 7336 6111).

**CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF** Anthony Page's three-hour revival of Tennessee Williams' Pulitzer Prize-

winning play about the tensions within a powerful family on a **Middlesex Theatre** stage may seem too restrained for some, but it still captures the play's bubbling emotion & brings out the barbed comedy. There's also a quiet power to the performances, particularly when Brendan Fraser (square-jawed hero of *The Mummy* & its sequel) as the alcoholic Brick & Ned Beatty's Big Daddy share scenes together, & an agile, funny, sexy turn by Frances O'Connor as Brick's frustrated wife. Until Dec 22. **Lyric**, Shaftesbury Ave. 191 (020 7494 0448).

**FAITH HEALER** Three of our finest actors—Ken Stott, Geraldine James & Alan McKinnell—bring to life, in a series of monologues, an itinerant Irish faith healer reflects on the past 20 years of his life, as does his put-upon wife & his manager, who is caught between the bawling couple. Nov 22-Jan 19. **Almeida at King's Cross**, Omega Place, off Caledonia Road, N1 (020 7369 1761).

**KISS ME KATE** Michael Blakemore's hit Broadway production of Cole Porter's delightful backstage musical, about

Hot stuff: Frances O'Connor & Brendan Fraser bring quiet power & bubbling emotion to *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, below.

a company touring *The Taming of the Shrew*, its squabbling stars & two gangsters after a bad debt, features wonderfully catty gags, flamboyant dance routines & a host of famous songs, including "Always True to You" & "Too Dam Hot". **Victoria Palace**, Victoria St, SW1 (020 7834 1317).

**NO MAN'S LAND** With Harold Pinter directing, we're sure to get all the humour, pathos & intriguing power shifts contained in his 1975 chamber piece about the

encounter between a rich & successful writer & an impoverished poet. John Wood & Corin Redgrave play the sparring old-timers. Opens December. **Lyttelton, National Theatre**, South Bank, SE1 (020 7452 3000).

**PRIVATE LIVES** Alan Rickman, Lindsay



Duncan & director Howard Davies had a celebrated success together with *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* in 1985. Now they've teamed up for Noel Coward's acerbic comedy with Rickman & Duncan as on-again, off-again spouses Elyot & Amanda, with the superb Emma Fielding & Adam Godley as the prim & proper Sibyl & Victor. **Albany Theatre**, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (020 7369 1740).

**THE ROYAL FAMILY** Judi Dench makes a welcome return to the stage in Peter Hall's revival of George S Kaufman & Edna Ferber's 1921 comedy, as the formidable head of an unruly dynasty of actors who rule supreme on Broadway in the 1920s. This starry cast includes Harriet Walter, Peter Bowles & Julia McKenzie. Until Feb 2. **Theatre Royal, Haymarket**, SW1 (020 7330 8800).

**SOUTH PACIFIC** The team behind the National's revival of *My Fair Lady*—director Trevor Nunn, designer John Napier & choreographer Matthew Bourne—now brings us Rodgers & Hammerstein's 1949 musical about two wartime romances on a South Sea island. Get ready to meet a stranger on some enchanted evening & wash that man right out of your hair. Opens Dec 3. **Oliver, National Theatre**, South Bank, SE1 (020 7452 3000).

High jinks: surreal circus troupe **Cirque du Soleil** returns to **Battersea Power Station** with more antics in *Quidam*, above; the all-singing, all-dancing Broadway production of **Cole Porter's Kiss Me Kate**, below right, hits London.

## CHRISTMAS & CHILDREN'S SHOWS

**ALADDIN: THE WONDERFUL SCAMP** A Victorian pantomime performed in one of London's last surviving music halls. Nov 29-Feb 9. **Players' Theatre**, Villiers St, WC2 (020 7839 1134).

**ALADDIN: AN ARABIAN NIGHT OUT** The inventive Told by an Idiot Circus, the award-winning *Aladdin* pantomime shines. Nov 30-Jan 12. **Lync Hammersmith**, King St, W6 (020 8741 2311).

**ALICE IN WONDERLAND** The Royal Shakespeare Company's latest family show is Adrian Mitchell's new dramatisation of Lewis Carroll's popular adventure. Until Nov 24. **Barbican Theatre**, Barbican Centre, Silk Street, EC2 (020 7638 8891).

**THE LION, THE WITCH & THE WARDROBE** Adrian Mitchell's RSC adaptation of C.S. Lewis' saga returns. Dec 6-Jan 26. **Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Ave**, EC1 (020 7863 6000).

**MONKEY: A TALE FROM CHINA** The roughish Monkey's quest for some sacred scriptures features all manner of demons, dragons & gods in Mick Gordon's production. Nov 22-Jan 19. **Young Vic**, The Cut, SE1 (020 7326 6263).

**THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS** A new play by Charles Wyllie, inspired by Clement Clarke Moore's celebrated poem. Nov 15-Feb 2. **Victoria Theatre**, 240 The Broadway, Wimbledon SW19 (020 8543 4888).

**QUIDAM** The latest dynamic show from the surreal troupe **Cirque du Soleil** returns for the Christmas season. Opens Nov 22. **Battersea Power Station** (020 7957 4050).

**THE SNOWMAN** Bill Alexander's enchanting staging of Raymond Briggs' tale is back again. Dec 11-Jan 13. **Peacock Theatre**, Portugal St, WC2 (020 7863 8222).



[top theatre]



## THEATRE-OLD'S 50-YEAR-OLD SECRET

Agatha Christie's classic murder-mystery and record-breaking play *The Mousetrap* makes theatrical history once again as it celebrates 50 years of entertaining London's theatregoers.

The famous whodunnit opened at the **Ambassador Theatre** on November 25, 1952, with Richard Attenborough and Sheila Sim (above) in the leading roles. When Attenborough left 18 months later, ticket sales plummeted and the theatre gave the production notice to leave. But with news of its imminent closure, people rushed to catch a last performance and its popularity grew. By the mid-1970s, when it transferred to its present home at St Martin's Theatre, it was the world's longest-running stage production.

"If we put a notice up now saying 'closing month' we'd probably be busy for another two decades," says David Turner, the director since 1987.

Originally written in 1947 as a radio play to mark Queen Mary's 80th birthday, Christie adapted the work for the stage. It focusses on a group of people in the countryside with clues to the murderer's identity disclosed as the story progresses. The detective writer warned her first audience in 1952, "Do not reveal the ending to those who have not yet seen *The Mousetrap*!", and it has remained the best-kept secret in theatreland ever since. **St Martin's Theatre**, West St, WC2. Mon-Sat 8pm, Tues mat 2.45pm, Sat mat 5pm. E11 25-228 (020 7836 1443).

CLAIRE HUTCHINGS





## dance

**Adding to the usual seasonal plums this year are the Moscow Stanislavsky Ballet with *The Snow Maiden* & *Swan Lake*, & English National Ballet with Michael Corder's *Cinderella*. Less festive but more intriguing fare comes from Ballett Frankfurt & Rambert Dance Company.**

### BALLETT FRANKFURT

Artistic director William Forsythe presents two of his full-length works: the four-part *Artifact* (1984) features music by Eva Crossman-Hecht & Bach; *Eido: Telos* (1995) includes text, speech & theatrical effects with music by Thom Willems. Nov 3-10, *Sadler's Wells*, Rosebery Ave, EC1 (020 7863 8000).

### ENGLISH NATIONAL BALLET

The company presents the last chance to see Derek Deane's festive stalwart *The Nutcracker*, this year sponsored by Barbie no less (Dec 18-Jan 5). The New Year brings Michael Corder's Olivier Award-winning interpretation of Prokofiev's *Cinderella* (Jan 11-12 & 17-19) & a triple bill of Balanchine's *Apollo* & *Who Cares?* with Christopher Hampson's new ballet *Double Concerto* (Jan 14-16). *Coliseum*, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (020 7632 8300).

**JOAQUIN CORTES** The swarthy, Armani-clad dancer presents his new show which combines

**Step together: the Moscow Stanislavsky Ballet performs *Swan Lake*, above; below ENB's Monica Perego is Michael Corder's *Cinderella*.**



flamenco, jazz, Cuban & classical themes. Jan 11 & 12, *Albert Hall*, Kensington Gore, SW7 (020 7838 3109).

### MOSCOW STANISLAVSKY BALLET

The company, founded in 1929 by former Bolshoi star Victorina Krieger, brings 90 dancers & its own orchestra for a Tchaikovsky double bill choreographed by Vladimir Bourmeister: *The Snow Maiden* (Dec 20-Jan 2) & *Swan Lake* (Jan 4-12). *Royal Festival Hall*, South Bank Centre, SE1 (020 7960 4242).

### RAMBERT DANCE COMPANY

Programme 1: Glenn Wilkinson's frenetic *Twin Suite 2*; Merce Cunningham's *Ground Level Overlay*; Christopher Bruce's *Meeting Point*, performed to Michael Nyman's Saxophone

Concerto. Programme 2: Bruce's kaleidoscopic *Land* & Jeremy James' club music-inspired *Gaps*, *Lapse* & *Relapse*. Nov 13-24, *Sadler's Wells*.

### ROYAL BALLET

New director Ross Stretton's first season promises a less traditional repertoire, starting with Rudolf Nureyev's version of Petipa's *Don Quixote* (in repertory until Nov 14) & John Cranko's *Onegin* danced to

Tchaikovsky (from Nov 22). Peter Wright's revised staging of *The Nutcracker* settles in for the Christmas season (from Dec 13-Jan 5). The New Year sees a memory-fuelled triple bill of Australian Stephen Baynes' *Beyond Bach*, Antony Tudor's *The Leaves are Fading* danced to Dvorak string quartets, & Frederick Ashton's Chopin-scored *Marguerite & Armand* (from Jan 26). *Royal Opera House*, Covent Garden, WC2 (020 7304 4000).

### OUT OF TOWN

#### BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

*The Nutcracker* Peter Wright's popular version of the Christmas favourite. Nov 30-Dec 15. *Birmingham Hippodrome* (0121 689 3000).

#### ENGLISH NATIONAL BALLET

*Cinderella* Nov 5-10, *Oxford Apollo* (0870 606 3502); Nov 22-24, *Manchester Opera House* (0161 242 2509); Nov 29-Dec 1, *Bristol Hippodrome* (0870 607 7500). *Apollo/Who Cares?/Double Concerto* Nov 20-21, *Manchester Opera House* (0161 242 2509); Nov 27-28, *Bristol Hippodrome* (0870 607 7500). *The Nutcracker* Dec 11-15, *Liverpool Empire* (0870 606 3536).

#### MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP

The New York based company's mixed programme includes Morris' *I Don't Want to Love*, set to Monteverdi madrigals with costumes by Isaac Mizrahi, *The Office*, set to Dvorak, & Morris performing his solo piece *Peccadillos*. Nov 6-7, *Milton Keynes Theatre* (01908 606090); Nov 9-10, *Glasgow Theatre Royal* (0141 332 9000); Nov 12-13, *Salford Lowry* (0161 876 2000); Nov 16-17, *Wycombe Swan* (01494 512000).





## cinema

**Fantasy fans young and old eagerly await the screen versions of *Harry Potter & Lord of the Rings*. Will Smith packs a punch in *Ali* & Nicole Kidman gets a chilly reception in haunted house thriller *The Others*.**

**ALI** Detail-obsessed director Michael Mann (*Heat*, *The Insider*) teams up with Will Smith to portray 10 crucial years in the life of boxing legend Cassius Clay, from taking the world heavyweight title in 1964 & converting to Islam to fighting off George Foreman in the famous 1974 "Rumble in the Jungle" under his new name Muhammad Ali. Opens Dec 7.

### APOCALYPSE NOW: REDUX

Francis Ford Coppola wants you to forget 1979's *Apocalypse Now*. It was rushed, incomplete, the victim of compromise, the director says. He's now added 49 minutes of never-before-seen footage (including a plantation sequence that criticises colonial politics) to his epic story of war & lies, insanity & darkness during the Vietnam war. Some may find that more doesn't necessarily equal better, but it's worth seeing simply to experience this hypnotic vision of war on the big screen again. Opens Nov 23.

**BANDITS** According to one of the film's producers, this is a "romantic comedy-road picture-heist hybrid" which sounds like a recipe for disaster. But it's directed by canny

Francis Ford Coppola's extended *Apocalypse Now*, above; Reese Witherspoon in *Legally Blonde*, below.

director Barry Levinson (*Rain Man*) & features a strong cast, including Bruce Willis as a suave bank robber, Billy Bob Thornton as his hypochondriac, gourmet-cooking accomplice, & Cate Blanchett as the unhappy housewife they both fall for. Opens Dec 7.

**HARRY POTTER & THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE** If the words Hogwarts, Quidditch & Gryffindor mean nothing to you, then chances are you haven't been

near a bookshop for the past three years. The first in JK Rowling's best-selling series of novels gets the Hollywood treatment to the tune of \$150 million. Daniel Radcliffe plays the young orphan attending the Hogwarts School for witches & wizards who tries to unravel the mystery of his parents' death & confront the forces intent on destroying him. The best that

British Equity can offer bring the other characters to life, including Richard Harris (Dumbledore), Maggie Smith (Professor McGonagall) & Robbie Coltrane (Hagrid). Chris Columbus directs. Opens Nov 16.

**LEGALLY BLONDE** A surprise summer hit in America, this patchy but sweet-spirited comedy



### FANTASY FRICTION

If the £180 million budget for the three-movie adaptation of *Lord of the Rings*, the first part of which opens on December 19, is sky-high, so are expectations surrounding the films. To date, JRR Tolkien's fantasy trilogy about the battle between good and evil has sold 50 million copies.

It's a far cry from 1954 when the first part of Tolkien's saga was tentatively published with a 3,500 print run. No one was sure if there was a market for a three-volume fairy tale. But critical reaction was good enough for the first volume to sell out within a month of publication and, when the three books were packaged as a single-volume paperback edition in 1965, it became a massive hit. Tolkien, a professor at Oxford University, used his deep knowledge of myth, legend and language to weave his epic tale but also to express his post-war fears of industrialisation, pollution and loss of tradition. Over the years his trilogy has incurred charges of escapism, nostalgia and reactionary politics. Tolkien, who died in 1973 aged 81, was well aware of such criticism, as was shown in his ditty: "The Lord of the Rings/Is one of those things/If you like it you do/If you don't, then you boo." No doubt the movie version will split opinion as well.

IAN JOHNS







benefits from a breezily entertaining turn by Reese Witherspoon. She stars as a Beverly Hills airhead who invades Harvard Law School to win back her stuffy ex-boyfriend & ends up involved in an improbable murder trial. Opens Nov 9.

**LORD OF THE RINGS** JRR Tolkien's epic fantasy comes alive in the first of three films. Elijah Wood plays the heroic hobbit who must travel to the foul domain of Mordor to destroy an all-powerful ring that controls the fate of Middle Earth. Director Peter Jackson has used various cunning devices to achieve the different heights of hobbits, elves & humans. Initial clips suggest that everything from rural Hobbiton to thousands of drooling Orcs have been beautifully shot. A huge cast

includes Ian McKellen as Gandalf the wizard, Ian Holm as Bilbo Baggins, Cate Blanchett as elf queen Galadriel & Liv Tyler as the elf Arwen. Opens Dec 19. See box story p66.

**THE OTHERS** This haunted house thriller, set during the waning days of World War II, stars Nicole Kidman as a mother who takes her two light-allergic children to a remote Victorian mansion that seems to have more rooms than the palace at Versailles. There they discover misty entities creeping out of the darkness. All the usual bump-in-the-night scares are enjoyably deployed with a twist ending that almost makes this a mahogany drawing-room version of *The Sixth Sense*. Opens Nov 2.

**THE PRINCESS DIARIES** A *Pygmalion* story told in *Pollyanna* terms, this one's as sappy as they come, but at Christmastime sappy can work. It's a modern-day fairy-tale story in which a shy, awkward California teenager (Anne Hathaway) discovers that she's the heir to her late, absent father's tiny kingdom & in need of a regal makeover by her grandmother (Julie Andrews). Although director Garry Marshall (*Pretty Woman*) lets the story veer into lame high school shenanigans, it boasts a lot of charm thanks to Andrews' stately turn & Hathaway's sunny performance. Opens Dec 26.



Yuri Temirkanov, above, conducts the acclaimed Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in an evening of Brahms at the Barbican.

## music

Among the usual seasonal sounds, Kiri Te Kanawa, Cecilia Bartoli & pianist Martha Argerich perform intriguing recitals at the Barbican, which also celebrates John Adams. Willie Nelson & Lesley Garrett are sure to delight their fans at the Albert Hall. Smooth jazz from Diana Krall & gospel add to the diverse mix at the Royal Festival Hall.

### ALBERT HALL

Kensington Gore, SW7 (020 7589 8212).

**Jools Holland** The amiable pianist with his Rhythm & Blues Orchestra. Nov 24 & 25.

**Willie Nelson** Old-time country from the veteran performer. Nov 28.

**Montserrat Caballe** The formidable diva performs arias, including Verdi, Puccini, Massenet & Gounod, with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra Nov 29.

**Lesley Garrett** Favourite pieces, including Puccini, Mozart, Strauss, Gershwin & Bernstein, with the BBC Concert Orchestra under Philip Ellis. Nov 30 & Dec 2.

**Royal Choral Society Christmas Carols** With fanfare trumpeters from the Grenadier Guards & the London Concert Orchestra. Dec 17.

**King's College Choir** The choir performs Poulenc, Charpentier, Bach & Handel & carols for all with the Philharmonia Orchestra & Chorus. Dec 18.

**A Gospel Christmas** With the London Community Gospel Choir & special guest Mel B. Dec 20.

**Carols by Candlelight** Festive music from Vivaldi, Mozart, Bach, Handel & Corelli performed by the Mozart Festival Orchestra & Chorus. Dec 24.

Top left, the strong cast of *Bandits*; the *Pygmalion*-esque *Princess Diaries*, left.





**Song birds:** Diana Krall weaves her silky jazz magic at the Festival Hall, left; mezzo-soprano Cecilia Bartoli, below right, sings arias from Gluck operas at the Barbican.

#### ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL

*South Bank Centre, SE1 (020 7960 4242).*

**Diana Krall** The silky jazz singer & pianist appears with the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra. Nov 17 & 18.

**South African Gospel Singers** The 21-piece choir & musicians embrace gospel, jazz, soul & traditional African songs. Dec 13

**Mozart Festival Chorus** Candlelit performances in period costume of Handel's *Messiah* (Dec 8) & Bach, Mozart, Corelli & carols (Dec 16).

**King Singers** A festive selection by the popular choral group, accompanied by the BBC Concert Orchestra. Dec 10.

#### Johann Strauss Orchestra

Traditional waltzes, marches & polkas with the Johann Strauss Dancers (in period costume) & Chorus. Dec 30.

#### BARBICAN HALL

*Silk Street, EC1 (020 7638 8891).*

**Bryn Terfel** The bass-baritone performs songs by Poulenc, Schumann & Schubert & others with pianist Malcolm Martineau (Jan 13).

**Yo-Yo Ma** The acclaimed cellist joins the Orchestre National de Lyon for work by Peter Lieberman, Gabrieli & Boulez. Nov 14.

**Baltimore Symphony Orchestra** A Brahms evening under Yuri Temirkanov, with violinist Pamela Frank. Nov 26.

**Kiri Te Kanawa** A varied concert from the ever-popular soprano. Dec 8.

**Cecilia Bartoli** The pre-eminent mezzo-soprano performs arias from Gluck's Italian operas accompanied by new ensemble Le Musiche Nove. Dec 21.

**Martha Argerich** The tempestuous Argentinian pianist presents two chamber concerts devised by herself. Jan 5 & 6.

**John Adams** A weekend devoted to the influential composer, ranging from the first complete UK performance of his opera *The Death of Klinghoffer* to the ground-breaking minimalist works *Shaker Loops* & *Phrygian Gates*. Jan 18-20.



## FROM SHOE SHINER TO SHINING STAR

A favourite haunt of celebrities, Havana in the 1950s was a city of glamour and glitz with nightclubs pulsating to the rhythmic big band sounds of traditional *son*, one of the best-loved music and dance forms in Cuba.

After the revolution of 1959 and the long period of international isolation that followed, the nation's golden age of music was virtually forgotten. Then, in 1996, US guitarist Ry Cooder visited Cuba and persuaded some of the great musicians of the era out of retirement. The long-forgotten 70- and 80-year-olds were struggling on state pensions and doing odd-jobs. Cooder reassembled them into a band called the Buena Vista Social Club, after a former Havana club.

The subsequent Grammy-winning album, *Buena Vista Social Club*, and the acclaimed film of the same name by Wim Wenders, catapulted the elderly performers into belated international stardom with sell-out performances across the globe.

One of its stars, 73-year-old singer Ibrahim Ferrer, right, used to shine shoes on Havana's streets. "An angel came and picked me up and said 'Chico, come and do this record,'" recalls Ferrer. "I didn't want to do it because I had given up on my music. But now I'm very happy. I don't have to shine shoes any more." Nov 13-14. Royal Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, SW7. 7.30pm. £20-£40 (020 7589 8212).

CLAIRE HUTCHINGS





## opera

**ENO stages a new production of Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* and brings back Jonathan Miller's 1992 *Les Mikado* for Christmas. Wagnerians can savour Simon Rattle conducting a new *Parsifal* at the Royal Opera, which also revives Deborah Warner's *Turn of the Screw* in the New Year.**

## ENGLISH FESTIVAL OPERA

Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank Centre, SE1 (020 7960 4242).

**Madam Butterfly** Fiona O'Neill takes the title role in Tom Hawkes' production, featuring a new English translation, with the London City Opera Orchestra. Dec 30-Jan 1.

**ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA** *London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2* (020 7632 8300).

**War & Peace** Tim Albery directs a new staging of Prokofiev's rarely seen epic. Cast includes Willard White, Simon Keenlyside, Susan Chilcott & Peter Sidhom. Paul Daniel conducts. In repertory until Nov 28.

**The Marriage of Figaro** Christopher Maltman sings Mozart's hero in this new production by Steven Stead, conducted by Jane Glover. With Mary Nelson as Susanna & Orla Boylan as Countess Almaviva. In repertory from Nov 8-Dec 7.

**The Rake's Progress** A new staging by Annabel Arden of Stravinsky's Faustian tale inspired by Hogarth. With Barry Banks as Tom Rakewell, Gidon Saks as Nick Shadow & Lisa



Milne as Anne Trulove. In repertory from Nov 29-Dec 15.

**The Mikado** Jonathan Miller's ever-popular production, set in a 1920s hotel, features Richard Suart as Ko-Ko, Bonaventura Bottone as Nanki-Poo, Alison Roddy as Yum-Yum & Graeme Danby as Pooch-Sah. In repertory from Dec 10-Feb 16.

**The Valkyrie** A staged concert of one of Wagner's most emotive works. With Par Lindskog as Siegmund, Robert Hayward as Wotan, Orla Boylan as Sieglinde & Kathleen Broderick as Brunnhilde. In repertory from Jan 24.

**ROYAL OPERA** *Covent Garden, WC2* (020 7304 4000).

**The Bartered Bride** Francesca Zambello's 1998 staging of Smetana, with an English translation by Kit Hesketh Harvey, returns. ENO regular Susan Grillon makes her Covent Garden debut as Marenička with Paul Charles Clarke as her true love, Jeník. In repertory from Nov 7-20.

**Così fan tutte** Jonathan Miller's contemporary staging of Mozart's double-dealing comedy from 1995 features Soile Isokoski & Helene Schneiderman as the ladies, Dalibor Jeniš & Kenneth Tarver as their scheming fiancés, & Thomas Allen as the worldly-wise Don Alfonso. In repertory from Nov 15-30.

**Parsifal** Simon Rattle conducts a new production, directed by Klaus Michael Gruber. Danish tenor Stig Andersen heads the cast, with Lithuanian mezzo-soprano Violeta Urmana as Kundry, John Tomlinson as Gurnemanz & Willard White as Kingsohn. In repertory from Dec 8-22.

**The Turn of the Screw** Deborah Warner's celebrated 1997 staging of

**Thrills & chills:** Joan Rodgers is the governess in Britten's ghost story *The Turn of the Screw*, above; below left, Jonathan Miller's popular 1920s staging of *The Mikado* returns to ENO; below right, Timothy Robinson is bright & breezy in Zambello's version of *The Bartered Bride*.



Britten's ghost story returns with the original adult cast, including Ian Bostridge, Joan Rodgers, Jane Henschel & Vivian Tierney. In repertory from Jan 7-16.

## OUT OF TOWN

**GLYNDEBOURNE TOURING OPERA** *Glyndebourne, Lewes, E Sussex* (01273 813 813).

**Rodelinda** Emma Bell sings Handel's faithful wife who thinks her husband is dead in Christopher Howell's revival.

**Fidelio** Gunilla Stephen-Kallin sings Leonore in Deborah Warner's new production.

**Le nozze di Figaro** Graham Vick's production is revived with designs by Richard Hudson.

All three productions run in rep from Nov 8-10. *Theatre Royal, Norwich* (01603 630 000); Nov 13-17, *Milton Keynes Theatre* (01908 606 090); Nov 20-24, *Theatre Royal, Plymouth* (01752 267 222); Nov 27-30, *Apollo, Oxford* (0970 606 3502).

## sport

**Among traditional winter events of rugby & steeplechasing, England kicks off against both South Africa and Australia at Twickenham, and the top flight of racehorses leaps over the fences at Kempton Park.**

## EQUESTRIANISM

The Whitaker brothers & other top showjumpers vie for the £50,000 Grand Prix & the prestigious Puissance competition, as well as in the Mince Pie & Christmas Cracker Stakes. Entertainment includes a Shetland Pony "Grand National" & a daring display of horsemanship by the Ukrainian Cossacks. **Olympic World Cup Show** Dec 19-23. *Olympia, Hammersmith Rd, W14* (0870 733 0733).

## HORSE RACING

An excellent way to work off the season's excesses is to attend some of the country's post-Christmas popular steeplechase meetings. At Kempton the money will be on the French horse First Gold, who enjoyed a spectacular victory last year.

**Portemps King George VI Chase** Dec 26. *Kempton Park, Sunbury-on-Thames, Surrey* (01932 782292). **Coral Eurobet Welsh National** Dec 27. *Chepstow, Monmouthshire* (01291 622260).

## RUGBY UNION

After their magnificent 2000-01 season, hopes will be high for England wins against the two top sides from the southern hemisphere.

**England v Australia** Nov 10. *Twickenham, M24* (020 8931 6666).

**England v Romania** Nov 17. *Twickenham*.

**England v South Africa** Nov 24. *Twickenham*.

**Varsity match: Oxford v Cambridge** Dec 11. *Twickenham*.

**SNOOKER** Defending champion John Higgins takes on last year's world champion Ronnie O'Sullivan & current world number one, Mark Williams. **UK Championship** Dec 3-16. *Barbican Centre, York* (01904 553766).

**Best foot forward:** England's Jonny Wilkinson kicks out at Twickenham, above; below, Ronnie O'Sullivan takes on the current snooker champs in York.



## THE FESTIVAL CONTINUES

London's South Bank, the city's biggest arts and cultural quarter, has been a magnet for locals and visitors for the last 50 years.

A former site of war-damaged warehouses and factories, the area's fortunes changed overnight when it was chosen to host the 1951 Festival of Britain, above, a major arts event created to revive post-war morale.

Although the Festival closed in September 1951, its huge success led to the building of new venues to add to its centrepiece, the Royal Festival Hall. The National Film Theatre opened in 1952; and Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room, Hayward Gallery and the Royal National Theatre took up residence in the 1960s. Their state-of-the-art facilities offered a fitting platform for Britain's post-war creative vigour, which included Michael Tippett and Benjamin Britten in opera, the "angry young men" writers, and later the pop explosion. Fifty years on, a major 10-year investment programme is set to give the South Bank Centre an extra boost with new amenities and face-lifts. Plans include the refurbishment of the Festival Hall, a new underground concert hall and a Film Centre for Jubilee Gardens, and the redevelopment of the Hayward Gallery and Queen Elizabeth Hall. Work on improving access is already underway with a new footbridge linking Charing Cross to the South Bank. To keep abreast of developments visit [www.royalfestivalhall.org.uk](http://www.royalfestivalhall.org.uk). CLAIRE HUTCHINGS



## exhibitions

**Modern America at the Barbican & Renaissance Italy at the National Gallery are among the high points of the season's exhibitions. New permanent galleries open at the Museum of London & the V&A. Both of these establishments—like many other London museums—revert to free admission from December.**

*Readers are advised to check dates & times before making a special journey.*

### BARBICAN ART GALLERY

Barbican Centre, Silk St, EC2 (020 7638 8891).

**the americans.new art** The latest wave of art from across the Atlantic features 50 paintings, sculptures & videos by 30 of the USA's most creative new artists. Until Dec 23. *Mon-Sat 10am-6pm (Wed until 8pm); Sun noon-6pm.*

### BRITISH MUSEUM

Great Russell St, WC1 (020 7323 8000).

### Agatha Christie & Archaeology:

**Mystery in Mesopotamia** How the discoveries of the great crime writer & her archaeologist husband in the Near East influenced Christie's detective writing. Objects from the Museum's collections are shown alongside Christie's

Rachel Feinstein's *Yesterday*, below, is on show in the americans.new art at the Barbican. Right, Joan Miro's *Aidez Espagne*, inspired by the Spanish Civil War, is at the Imperial War Museum.

archives, photographs, & films. Nov 8-Mar 24. *Daily 10am-5.30pm (Thurs, Fri until 8.30pm). Closed Dec 24-26 & Jan 1.*

**COURTAULD INSTITUTE GALLERY** Somerset House, Strand, WC2 (020 7848 2526).

**Art on the Line: the Royal Academy Exhibitions at Somerset House 1780-1836** Some 300 works, first hung in the Great Room of Somerset House during the Royal Academy's prestigious annual exhibitions, have been reunited from across the globe. Artists range from Reynolds & Gainsborough to Turner & Constable. Until Jan 20. *Daily 10am-6pm (Dec 31 10am-4pm; Jan 1 noon-6pm). Closed Dec 24-26.*

### DESIGN MUSEUM

28 Shad Thames, SE1 (020 7940 8790).

**John Galliano at Dior** A celebration of the British designer's passion for fashion, & the way he revitalised the house of Dior. Nov 30-Apr 21. *Daily 10am-5.45pm (Dec 24 & 31, until 3pm). Closed Dec 25-26.*

### IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM

Lambeth Rd, SE1 (020 7416 5320).

**The Spanish Civil War: Dreams & Nightmares** The human cost of the conflict, & the influence it had on artists, writers & intellectuals of the day, illustrated by the works of Picasso, Miro, Dali, Capa, Orwell & Hemingway. Until Apr 28. *Daily 10am-6pm. Closed Dec 24-26.*

### MUSEUM OF LONDON

London Wall, EC2 (020 7600 0807).

**World City Gallery** A new gallery illustrates the birth of London as



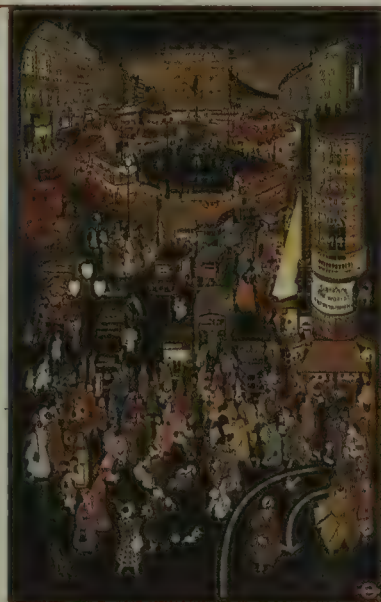
## GOING UNDERGROUND FOR ART

By the 1950s, the Underground had firmly established itself as the lifeblood of London, shuttling more people than ever before across the capital. The growth in passengers partly reflected the success of a poster advertising campaign launched by the visionary Frank Pick, who took charge of the Underground Group's publicity in 1908. "In the Underground's heyday, the 1920s and 30s, Pick commissioned as many as 40 posters a year," explains Oliver Green, Head of Collections for London's Transport Museum, and author of *Underground Art* (£17.95, Laurence King). "The Underground became the biggest modern art gallery in the world featuring over the years more than 3,000 original posters of stunning diversity. The avant-garde movements of Cubism, Futurism and Vorticism were introduced to the British public through Underground posters."

With so many people using the Tube, the role of posters changed in the 1950s. The new man in charge of publicity, Harold F Hutchison, believed they should inform commuters about the workings of the Underground rather than encourage more travel, although the most striking artwork continued to advertise off-peak leisure attractions. "One of the innovations of the 1950s was the 'pair poster'," says Green, "which was designed in two halves: one side was entirely pictorial while the other was largely given over to text. This gave both the artist or designer and the copywriter more space and freedom to develop an idea."

A new exhibition, *The Colours of Winter*, examines the development of Underground poster art with particular emphasis on winter themes. Nov 16-Jan 20. *London Transport Museum, Covent Garden, WC2. Open daily 10am-6pm (Fri 11am-6pm). Closed Dec 24-26. £5.95, concessions £3.95, children free (020 7565 7299).*

CLAIRE HUTCHINGS







ADAGP PARIS & DACS, LONDON 2001

a modern city, covering the period from the French Revolution of 1789 to the beginning of World War I. Using film, photography, oral history & objects, it shows East End poverty, imperial splendour, immigration & the export of goods. Opens Dec 7. Mon-Sat 10am-5.50pm; Sun noon-5.50pm. Closed Dec 24-26 & Jan 1.

#### NATIONAL GALLERY

Trafalgar Sq, WC2 (020 7747 2885).

#### Pisanello: Painter to the Renaissance Court

Famous in his lifetime as a painter & medallist, Pisanello (1395-1455) was court artist to two of Italy's ruling houses, the Gonzaga in Mantua & the d'Este in Ferrara. This exhibition focuses on two panel paintings—*The Vision of Saint Eustace* & *The Virgin & Child with Saints George & Anthony Abbot*—alongside drawings, medals, illuminations & tapestries. Until Jan 13. Daily 10am-6pm (Wed until 9pm). Closed Dec 24-26 & Jan 1.

#### TATE BRITAIN

Millbank, SW1 (020 7887 8008).

#### Exposed: The Victorian Nude

In spite of Victorian prudery the nude flourished in British 19th-century art. The exhibition examines the male & female nude in painting, drawing & sculpture, photography, illustration & film. Until Jan 27. Daily 10am-5.40pm. Closed Dec 24-26.

#### VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM

Cromwell Rd, SW7 (020 7942 2000).

**British Galleries** A sequence of newly renovated rooms presents British design & art from 1500 to 1900, including among its 3,000 exhibits items by Chippendale, Morris & Mackintosh. Open Nov 22. Daily 10am-5.45pm (Wed until 9.30pm). Closed Dec 24-26 & Jan 1.



IMAGE BANK

## The making of multicultural London

The emergence of London as the most culturally diverse city in the world began 50 years ago. The massive task of post-war reconstruction, combined with an acute labour shortage, prompted the first big wave of migration from Britain's former colonies, while economic prosperity opened up new opportunities for its existing immigrant population.

London's first large group of new recruits after the war sailed from Jamaica on the *SS Empire Windrush* ocean liner in 1948. They were initially accommodated in air-raid shelters at Clapham Common but nearby Brixton became their focus for settlement. "Brixton had the nearest Labour Exchange," explains Sam Walker, director of The Black Cultural Archives in London. "It was a run-down area but sympathetic landlords provided lodgings for the new arrivals at a time when colour bans in London were common."

By the mid-1950s, London Transport and the National Health Service were employing staff directly from the West Indies. As thousands more arrived in the city, islanders gravitated to particular areas—Jamaicans to Brixton and south London, Trinidadians to the Notting Hill area, and Grenadians to Acton and west London.

"The West Indians who arrived in the 1950s played a key role in rebuilding the post-war British economy and contributed to London's rich cultural life in terms of music, sport, fashion and dance," explains Walker. "The Notting Hill Carnival, for example, is now one of the biggest events in London's calendar attracting two million visitors."

The 1950s was also an important period for the settlement of South Asians from India and Pakistan. A shortage of workers in the capital coincided with political upheavals on the Indian subcontinent, following partition in 1947. "First to arrive were ex-non-commissioned army officers, doctors and teachers, followed by those from rural backgrounds. Asians came from the Punjab, Gujarat, Sylhet and Kashmir," explains writer and historian Rozina Vizram. In Southall and Hounslow, Punjabi Sikhs came to work in the expanding new food processing, plastics, man-made textiles and rubber industries. In Tower Hamlets, Bangladeshis took jobs in local factories and then moved into the rag trade. Some left the factories to set up businesses catering for the needs of London's Asians, which today number over half a million. "Streets in many

boroughs were transformed as sari shops, grocers, travel agencies and electronics shops appeared. Indian restaurants, a trade dominated by the Bangladeshis, became a feature of many London streets," says Vizram.

Another new addition to the city's streets in the 1950s was the Chinese restaurant, particularly in central London where Chinatown was growing.

The capital's first Chinese immigrant sailors arrived in the first half of the 19th century and by the 1880s they had established their own quarter near the docks in Limehouse with shops, laundries, restaurants (below) and hostels for visiting Chinese seamen. After World War II, a combination of factors—including the Blitz bombing and a slump in the shipping industry—contributed to the virtual demise of Limehouse Chinatown. At the same time, however, Britons were developing a taste for Oriental cuisine. To satisfy the new demand, London's Chinese population moved to the West End, with its low rents and busy theatre trade, to open up restaurants and takeaways.

"Cheap and available property around Gerrard Street and Lisle Street in the late 1940s and 1950s, together with the booming economy and a growing trend among Britons to eat out, offered the Chinese a way out of their bleak post-war situation," explains David Tan, Chinese Community Liaison for Westminster City Council. Fifty years on and Chinatown (above) is one of London's biggest tourist attractions and a thriving cultural and financial centre for the city's 60,000 Chinese. *Ethnic London Tours* (020 8314 7031) offers special tailor-made city tours taking in the best of multicultural London, from Afro-Caribbean street markets to Chinese medicine shops, Bengali music and dance to martial arts centres.

CLAIRE HUTCHINGS



IMAGE BANK LONDON



## other events

**Christmas treats in the capital include a charming Nativity scene at London Zoo & a party at the V&A. The New Year is saluted in London's West End with the now-traditional American-style parade.**

**COOKING UP HISTORY** In the Great Kitchens, a Mastercook & his team prepare a series of feasts fit for a king. Palace visitors can drop in to see demonstrations of cooking—savory or sweet—in Tudor, Stuart or Georgian styles, & even (Nov 10, 11) lend a hand at turning the spit loaded with wild boar. Nov 10-Dec 16. *Sat, Sun, 3pm. Hampton Court Palace, East Molesey, Surrey (020 8781 9500).*

**WINTER OLYMPIA FINE ART & ANTIQUES FAIR** Fine furniture & works of art, glass, tapestries, maps, jewellery, statuary & a host of other items on sale from 230 dealers. A loan exhibition of pewter will be the centrepiece of the show, which also features lectures on Vietnamese art & forgeries. Nov 12-18. *Mon 5-10pm; Tues 11am-9pm; Wed-Fri 11am-8pm; Sat 11am-7pm; Sun 11am-5pm. Olympia, W14 (020 7370 8345).*

**SPANISH RIDING SCHOOL OF VIENNA** The 26 magnificent white Lipizzaner stallions perform their elegant classical haute école steps—a cross between dressage figures & equine gymnastics. Nov 29-Dec 2. *Wembley Arena, Empire Way, Wembley, Middx (0870 736 6969).*

**NATIVITY SCENE** The camels, cattle, goats & sheep of the Children's Zoo star alongside costumed shepherds, kings & other figures in a delightfully biblical



**Horse play:** the Spanish Riding School of Vienna shows off its majestic white Lipizzaner stallions at Wembley Arena, top. Below, wild boar, anyone? Learn to cook for a king at Hampton Court.

spectacle. Dec 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 21-24. *10am-4pm. London Zoo, Regent's Park, NW1 (020 7449 6260; booking essential).*

**FESTIVAL OF TREES** At this grand charity dinner & ball held in the museum's Dinosaur Hall a dozen unique, exquisitely decorated Christmas trees will be auctioned to raise money for Save the Children. This year's tree designers include TV gardener Diarmud Gavin, jewellers Tiffany & Co & fashion houses Escada & Burberry; trees are expected to fetch between £2,000 & £20,000 each. Dec 4. *Natural History Museum, Cromwell Rd, SW7 (tables for 10 guests, £2,500, bookable on 020 7716 2184).*

**CHRISTMAS PARTY** The V&A's "late view" evening includes a choral concert in the Lecture Theatre, jazz around the Christmas Tree, communal carols under the Kissing Bough & an opportunity to purchase the perfect gift in the V&A shop. Father Christmas will give a present to everyone wearing red for the occasion. Dec 19. *6.30-10pm. Victoria & Albert Museum, Cromwell Rd, SW7 (020 7942 2209).*

**NEW YEAR'S DAY PARADE** Huge US-style procession through the heart of the West End, with cheerleaders, marching bands & giant inflatable figures. Jan 1. *Noon-4pm. Starts Parliament Sq, SW1; finishes Berkeley Sq, W1 (0900 525 2020; calls cost 60p per min; proceeds to the Let's Help London charity appeal).*

LISTINGS COMPILED BY IAN  
JOHNS & ANGELA BIRD

## GOLDEN YEAR

On June 3 a cacophony of whistles, gongs, drums and church bells will herald an official day of fun and festivity throughout the land. At the stroke of noon thousands of open-air Golden Jubilee parties begin in streets, parks and gardens celebrating 50 years since the accession of Queen Elizabeth II. And, as a spectacular conclusion to the day, the Queen will light the first in a string of beacons that will illuminate Britain from Land's End to John O'Groats.

To commemorate the Jubilee,



VISUALISATION BY EMERGENT VISION

London is to acquire a new, £14-million, covered footbridge, next to the Cannon Railway Bridge, which links the City with the new cultural Mecca of Bankside.

At Buckingham Palace the Queen's Gallery reopens in May—doubled in size after two years of refurbishment—presenting priceless treasures from the Royal Collection. Royal wedding dresses will go on show at Kensington Palace, and a fantastic floral design of royal crowns will be laid out in the gardens of Hampton Court.

The British Museum is planning a trail relating to queens of legend and history from Cleopatra to Guinevere, the Museum of London shows Coronation memorabilia, and the V&A traces the evolution of the tiara.

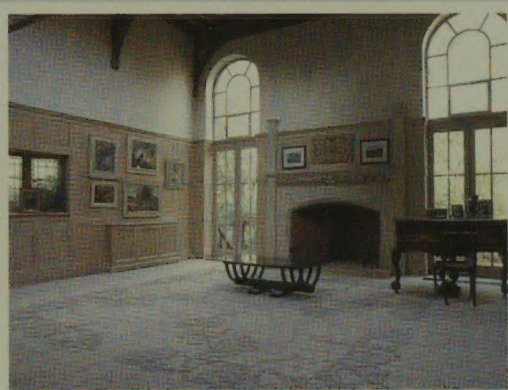
During Jubilee Year the Queen intends to travel the length and breadth of her realm—with a high profile stop at Manchester, where she opens the Commonwealth Games on July 25—expressing thanks to her subjects for their support and loyalty during her long reign. For information visit [www.goldenjubilee.gov.uk](http://www.goldenjubilee.gov.uk)

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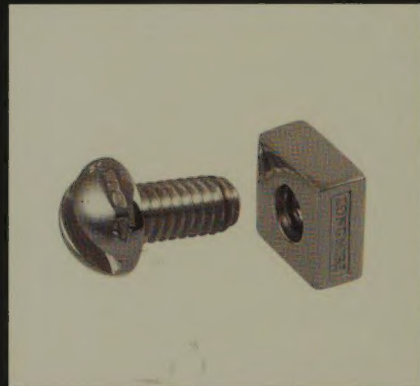
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